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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

WITH

AN ESSAY ON HIS LIFE AND GENIUS,

BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

VOLUME THE TENTH.

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PHILOLOGICAL

TRACTS, AND PREFACES.

THE

PLAN

OF AN

ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

To the Right Honourable PHILIP DORMER,
Earl of CHESTERFIELD,
One of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

MY LORD,

WHEN first I undertook to write an ENGLISH DICTIONARY, I had no expectation of any higher patronage than that of the proprietors of the copy, nor prospect of any other advantage than the price of my labour. I knew that the work in which I engaged is generally considered as drudgery for the blind, as the proper toil of artless industry; a task that requires neither the light of learning, nor the activity of genius, but may be successfully performed without any higher quality than that of bearing burthens with dull patience, and beating the track of the alphabet with sluggish resolution.

Whether this opinion, so long transmitted, and so widely propagated, had its beginning from truth and nature, or from accident and prejudice; whether it be decreed by the authority of reason, or the

tyranny of ignorance, that of all the candidates for literary praise, the unhappy lexicographer holds the lowest place, neither vanity nor interest incited me to enquire. It appeared that the province allotted me was, of all the regions of learning, generally confessed to be the least delightful, that it was believed to produce neither fruits nor flowers; and that, after a long and laborious cultivation, not even the barren laurel * had been found upon it.

Yet on this province, my Lord, I entered, with the pleasing hope, that, as it was low, it likewise would be safe. I was drawn forward with the prospect of employment, which, though not splendid, would be useful; and which, though it could not make my life envied, would keep it innocent; which would awaken no passion, engage me in no contention, nor throw in my way any temptation to disturb the quiet of others by censure, or my own by flattery.

I had read indeed of times, in which princes and statesmen thought it part of their honour to promote the improvement of their native tongues; and in which dictionaries were written under the protection of greatness. To the patrons of such undertakings I willingly paid the homage of believing that they, who were thus solicitous for the perpetuity of their language, had reason to expect that their actions would be celebrated by posterity, and that the eloquence which they promoted would be employed

* Lord Orrery, in a letter to Dr. Birch, mentions this as one of the very few inaccuracies in this admirable address, the *laurel* not being *barren* in any sense, but bearing fruits and flowers. Boswell's Life, vol. i. p. 160. Edit.1804. C.

in their praise. But I consider such acts of beneficence as prodigies, recorded rather to raise wonder than expectation; and content with the terms that I had stipulated, had not suffered my imagination to flatter me with any other encouragement, when I found that my design had been thought by your Lordship of importance sufficient to attract your favour.

How far this unexpected distinction can be rated among the happy incidents of life, I am not yet able to determine. Its first effect has been to make me anxious, lest it should fix the attention of the public too much upon me, and, as it once happened to an epick poet of France, by raising the reputation of the attempt, obstruct the reception of the work. I imagine what the world will expect from a scheme, prosecuted under your Lordship's influence; and I know that expectation, when her wings are once expanded, easily reaches heights which performance never will attain; and when she has mounted the summit of perfection, derides her follower, who dies in the pursuit.

Not therefore to raise expectation, but to repress it, I here lay before your Lordship the Plan of my undertaking, that more may not be demanded than I intend; and that, before it is too far advanced to be thrown into a new method, I may be advertised of its defects or superfluities. Such informations I may justly hope, from the emulation with which those, who desire the praise of elegance or discernment, must contend in the promotion of a design that you, my Lord, have not thought unworthy to share your attention with treaties and with wars.

In the first attempt to methodise my ideas I found a difficulty, which extended itself to the whole work. It was not easy to determine by what rule of distinction the words of this Dictionary were to be chosen. The chief intent of it is to preserve the purity, and ascertain the meaning of our English idiom; and this seems to require nothing more than that our language be considered, so far as it is our own; that the words and phrases used in the general intercourse of life, or found in the works of those whom we commonly stile polite writers, be selected, without including the terms of particular professions: since, with the arts to which they relate, they are generally derived from other nations, and are very often the same in all the languages of this part of the world. This is, perhaps, the exact and pure idea of a grammatical dictionary; but in lexicography, as in other arts, naked science is too delicate for the purposes of life. The value of a work must be estimated by its use: it is not enough that a dictionary delights the critick, unless, at the same time, it instructs the learner; as it is to little purpose that an engine amuses the philosopher by the subtilty of its mechanism, if it requires so much knowledge in its application as to be of no advantage to the common workman.

The title which I prefix to my work has long conveyed a very miscellaneous idea, and they that take a dictionary into their hands, have been accustomed to expect from it a solution of almost every difficulty. If foreign words therefore were rejected, it could be little regarded, except by cri-

ticks, or those who aspire to criticism; and however it might enlighten those that write, would be all darkness to them that only read. The unlearned much oftener consult their dictionaries for the meaning of words, than for their structures or formations; and the words that most want explanation, are generally terms of art; which, therefore, experience has taught my predecessors to spread with a kind of pompous luxuriance over their productions.

The academicians of France, indeed, rejected terms of science in their first essay, but found afterwards a necessity of relaxing the rigour of their determination; and, though they would not naturalize them at once by a single act, permitted them by degrees to settle themselves among the natives, with little opposition; and it would surely be no proof of judgment to imitate them in an error which they have now retracted, and deprive the book of its chief use, by scrupulous distinctions.

Of such words, however, all are not equally to be considered as parts of our language; for some of them are naturalized and incorporated, but others still continue aliens, and are rather auxiliaries than subjects. This naturalization is produced either by an admission into common speech, in some metaphorical signification, which is the acquisition of a kind of property among us; as we say, the *zenith* of advancement, the *meridian* of life, the *cynosure** of neighbouring eyes; or it is the consequence of long intermixture and frequent use, by which the ear is accustomed to the sound of words, till their original is forgotten, as in *equator*,

* Milton.

satellites; or of the change of a foreign into an English termination, and a conformity to the laws of the speech into which they are adopted; as in *category, cachexy, peripneumony*.

Of those which still continue in the state of aliens, and have made no approaches towards assimilation, some seem necessary to be retained; because the purchasers of the Dictionary will expect to find them. Such are many words in the common law, as *capias, habeas corpus, præmunire, nisi prius*: such are some terms of controversial divinity, as *hypostasis;* and of physick, as the names of diseases; and in general, all terms which can be found in books not written professedly upon particular arts, or can be supposed necessary to those who do not regularly study them. Thus, when a reader not skilled in physick happens in Milton upon this line,

———pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,

he will, with equal expectation, look into his dictionary for the word *marasmus*, as for *atrophy*, or *pestilence;* and will have reason to complain if he does not find it.

It seems necessary to the completion of a dictionary designed not merely for criticks, but for popular use, that it should comprise, in some degree, the peculiar words of every profession; that the terms of war and navigation should be inserted, so far as they can be required by readers of travels, and of history; and those of law, merchandise, and mechanical trades, so far as they can be supposed useful in the occurrences of common life.

But there ought, however, to be some distinc-

tion made between the different classes of words; and therefore it will be proper to print those which are incorporated into the language in the usual character, and those which are still to be considered as foreign, in the *italick* letter.

Another question may arise with regard to appellatives, or the names of species. It seems of no great use to set down the words *horse, dog, cat, willow, alder, daisy, rose,* and a thousand others, of which it will be hard to give an explanation, not more obscure than the word itself. Yet it is to be considered, that, if the names of animals be inserted, we must admit those which are more known, as well as those with which we are, by accident, less acquainted; and if they are all rejected, how will the reader be relieved from difficulties produced by allusions to the crocodile, the chameleon, the ichneumon, and the hyæna? If no plants are to be mentioned, the most pleasing part of nature will be excluded, and many beautiful epithets be unexplained. If only those which are less known are to be mentioned, who shall fix the limits of the reader's learning? The importance of such explications appears from the mistakes which the want of them has occasioned. Had Shakespeare had a dictionary of this kind, he had not made the *woodbine* entwine the *honeysuckle;* nor would Milton, with such assistance, have disposed so improperly of his *ellops* and his *scorpion.*

Besides, as such words, like others, require that their accents should be settled, their sounds ascertained, and their etymologies deduced, they cannot be properly omitted in the dictionary. And though

the explanations of some may be censured as trivial, because they are almost universally understood; and those of others as unnecessary, because they will seldom occur; yet it seems not proper to omit them, since it is rather to be wished that many readers should find more than they expect, than that one should miss what he might hope to find.

When all the words are selected and arranged, the first part of the work to be considered is the orthography, which was long vague and uncertain; which at last, when its fluctuation ceased, was in many cases settled but by accident; and in which, according to your Lordship's observation, there is still great uncertainty among the best criticks: nor is it easy to state a rule by which we may decide between custom and reason, or between the equiponderant authorities of writers alike eminent for judgment and accuracy.

The great orthographical contest has long subsisted between etymology and pronunciation. It has been demanded, on one hand, that men should write as they speak; but as it has been shewn that this conformity never was attained in any language, and that it is not more easy to persuade men to agree exactly in speaking than in writing, it may be asked with equal propriety, why men do not rather speak as they write. In France, where this controversy was at its greatest height, neither party, however ardent, durst adhere steadily to their own rule; the etymologist was often forced to spell with the people; and the advocate for the authority of pronunciation found it sometimes deviating so capriciously from the received use of writing, that he was constrained to

comply with the rule of his adversaries, lest he should lose the end by the means, and be left alone by following the crowd.

When a question of orthography is dubious, that practice has, in my opinion, a claim to preference which preserves the greatest number of radical letters, or seems most to comply with the general custom of our language. But the chief rule which I propose to follow is, to make no innovation, without a reason sufficient to balance the inconvenience of change; and such reasons I do not expect often to find. All change is of itself an evil, which ought not to be hazarded but for evident advantage; and as inconstancy is in every case a mark of weakness, it will add nothing to the reputation of our tongue. There are, indeed, some who despise the inconveniences of confusion, who seem to take pleasure in departing from custom, and to think alteration desirable for its own sake; and the reformation of our orthography, which these writers have attempted, should not pass without its due honours, but that I suppose they hold a singularity its own reward, or may dread the fascination of lavish praise.

The present usage of spelling, where the present usage can be distinguished, will, therefore, in this work be generally followed; yet there will be often occasion to observe, that it is in itself inaccurate, and tolerated rather than chosen; particularly when, by a change of one letter, or more, the meaning of a word is obscured; as in *farrier*, or *ferrier*, as it was formerly written, from *ferrum*, or *fer*; in *gibberish*, for *gebrish*, the jargon of *Geber*, and his chymical followers, understood by none but their own tribe. It

will be likewise sometimes proper to trace back the orthography of different ages, and shew by what gradations the word departed from its original.

Closely connected with orthography is pronunciation, the stability of which is of great importance to the duration of a language, because the first change will naturally begin by corruptions in the living speech. The want of certain rules for the pronunciation of former ages, has made us wholly ignorant of the metrical art of our ancient poets; and since those who study their sentiments regret the loss of their numbers, it is surely time to provide that the harmony of the moderns may be more permanent.

A new pronunciation will make almost a new speech; and therefore, since one great end of this undertaking is to fix the English language, care will be taken to determine the accentuation of all polysyllables by proper authorities, as it is one of those capricious phænomena which cannot be easily reduced to rules. Thus there is no antecedent reason for difference of accent in the words *dolorous* and *sonorous;* yet of the one Milton gives the sound in this line:

He pass'd o'er many a region dolorous;

and that of the other in this,

Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds.

It may likewise be proper to remark metrical licenses, such as contractions, *generous, gen'rous; reverend, rev'rend*; and coalitions, as *region, question.*

But it is still more necessary to fix the pronunciation of monosyllables, by placing with them

words of correspondent sound, that one may guard the other against the danger of that variation, which, to some of the most common, has already happened; so that the words *wound* and *wind*, as they are now frequently pronounced, will not rhyme to *sound* and *mind*. It is to be remarked, that many words written alike are differently pronounced, as *flow* and *brow:* which may be thus registered, *flow, woe: brow, now;* or of which the exemplification may be generally given by a distich: thus the words *tear*, or lacerate, and *tear*, the water of the eye, have the same letters, but may be distinguished thus, *tear, dare; tear, peer.*

Some words have two sounds which may be equally admitted, as being equally defensible by authority. Thus *great* is differently used.

> For *Swift* and him despised the farce of state,
> The sober follies of the wise and *great*. POPE.

> As if misfortune made the throne her seat,
> And none could be unhappy but the *great*. ROWE.

The care of such minute particulars may be censured as trifling; but these particulars have not been thought unworthy of attention in more polished languages.

The accuracy of the French, in stating the sounds of their letters, is well known; and, among the Italians, Crescembeni has not thought it unnecessary to inform his countrymen of the words which, in compliance with different rhymes, are allowed to be differently spelt, and of which the number is now so fixed, that no modern poet is suffered to increase it.

When the orthography and pronunciation are adjusted, the etymology or derivation is next to be considered, and the words are to be distinguished according to the different classes, whether simple, as *day, light,* or compound, as *day-light*; whether primitive, as, to *act,* or derivative, as *action, actionable, active, activity.* This will much facilitate the attainment of our language, which now stands in our dictionaries a confused heap of words without dependence, and without relation.

When this part of the work is performed, it will be necessary to enquire how our primitives are to be deduced from foreign languages, which may be often very successfully performed by the assistance of our own etymologists. This search will give occasion to many curious disquisitions, and sometimes perhaps to conjectures, which to readers unacquainted with this kind of study, cannot but appear improbable and capricious. But it may be reasonably imagined, that what is so much in the power of men as language, will very often be capriciously conducted. Nor are these disquisitions and conjectures to be considered altogether as wanton sports of wit, or vain shews of learning; our language is well-known not to be primitive or self-originated, but to have adopted words of every generation, and, either for the supply of its necessities, or the encrease of its copiousness, to have received additions from very distant regions; so that in search of the progenitors of our speech, we may wander from the tropick to the frozen zone, and find some in the vallies of Palestine, and some upon the rocks of Norway.

Beside the derivation of particular words, there

is likewise an etymology of phrases. Expressions are often taken from other languages; some apparently, as to *run a risque, courir un risque;* and some even when we do not seem to borrow their words; thus, to *bring about* or accomplish, appears an English phrase, but in reality our native word *about* has no such import, and is only a French expression, of which we have an example in the common phrase *venir à bout d'une affaire.*

In exhibiting the descent of our language, our etymologists seem to have been too lavish of their learning, having traced almost every word through various tongues, only to shew what was shewn sufficiently by the first derivation. This practice is of great use in synoptical lexicons, where mutilated and doubtful languages are explained by their affinity to others more certain and extensive, but is generally superfluous in English etymologies. When the word is easily deduced from a Saxon original, I shall not often enquire further, since we know not the parent of the Saxon dialect; but when it is borrowed from the French, I shall shew whence the French is apparently derived. Where a Saxon root cannot be found, the defect may be supplied from kindred languages, which will be generally furnished with much liberality by the writers of our glossaries; writers who deserve often the highest praise, both of judgment and industry, and may expect at least to be mentioned with honour by me, whom they have freed from the greatest part of a very laborious work, and on whom they have imposed, at worst, only the easy task of rejecting superfluities.

By tracing in this manner every word to its original, and not admitting, but with great caution, any of which no original can be found, we shall secure our language from being over-run with cant, from being crowded with low terms, the spawn of folly or affectation, which arise from no just principles of speech, and of which therefore no legitimate derivation can be shewn.

When the etymology is thus adjusted, the analogy of our language is next to be considered; when we have discovered whence our words are derived, we are to examine by what rules they are governed, and how they are inflected through their various terminations. The terminations of the English are few, but those few have hitherto remained unregarded by the writers of our dictionaries. Our substantives are declined only by the plural termination, our adjectives admit no variation but in the degrees of comparison, and our verbs are conjugated by auxiliary words, and are only changed in the preter tense.

To our language may be with great justness applied the observation of Quintilian, that speech was not formed by an analogy sent from heaven. It did not descend to us in a state of uniformity and perfection, but was produced by necessity, and enlarged by accident, and is therefore composed of dissimilar parts, thrown together by negligence, by affectation, by learning, or by ignorance.

Our inflections therefore are by no means constant, but admit of numberless irregularities, which in this Dictionary will be diligently noted. Thus *fox* makes in the plural *foxes*, but *ox* makes *oxen*. *Sheep* is the same in both numbers. Adjectives

are sometimes compared by changing the last syllable, as *proud, prouder, proudest:* and sometimes by particles prefixed, as, *ambitious, more* ambitious, *most* ambitious. The forms of our verbs are subject to great variety; some end their preter tense in *ed*, as I *love*, I *loved*, I have *loved:* which may be called the regular form, and is followed by most of our verbs of southern original. But many depart from this rule, without agreeing in any other; as I *shake*, I *shook*, I have *shaken*, or *shook*, as it is sometimes written in poetry; I *make*, I *made*, I have *made;* I *bring*, I *brought;* I *wring*, I *wrung;* and many others, which, as they cannot be reduced to rules, must be learned from the dictionary rather than the grammar.

The verbs are likewise to be distinguished according to their qualities, as actives from neuters; the neglect of which has already introduced some barbarities in our conversation, which if not obviated by just animadversions, may in time creep into our writings.

Thus, my Lord, will our language be laid down, distinct in its minutest subdivisions, and resolved into its elemental principles. And who upon this survey can forbear to wish, that these fundamental atoms of our speech might obtain the firmness and immutability of the primogenial and constituent particles of matter, that they might retain their substance while they alter their appearance, and be varied and compounded, yet not destroyed.

But this is a privilege which words are scarcely to expect: for, like their author, when they are not gaining strength, they are generally losing it.

Though art may sometimes prolong their duration, it will rarely give them perpetuity; and their changes will be almost always informing us, that language is the work of man, of a being from whom permanence and stability cannot be derived.

Words having been hitherto considered as separate and unconnected, are now to be likewise examined as they are ranged in their various relations to others by the rules of syntax or construction, to which I do not know that any regard has been yet shewn in English dictionaries, and in which the grammarians can give little assistance. The syntax of this language is too inconstant to be reduced to rules, and can be only learned by the distinct consideration of particular words as they are used by the best authors. Thus, we say, according to the present modes of speech, The soldier died *of* his wounds, and the sailor perished *with* hunger: and every man acquainted with our language would be offended by a change of these particles, which yet seem originally assigned by chance, there being no reason to be drawn from grammar why a man may not, with equal propriety, be said to die *with* a wound, or perish *of* hunger.

Our syntax therefore is not to be taught by general rules, but by special precedents; and in examining whether Addison has been with justice accused of a solecism in this passage,

> The poor inhabitant——
> Starves in the midst of nature's bounty curst,
> And in the loaden vineyard *dies for thirst*,

it is not in our power to have recourse to any esta-

blished laws of speech; but we must remark how the writers of former ages have used the same word, and consider whether he can be acquitted of impropriety, upon the testimony of Davies, given in his favour by a similar passage.

> She loaths the wat'ry glass wherein she gaz'd,
> And shuns it still, although *for thirst she dye.*

When the construction of a word is explained, it is necessary to pursue it through its train of phraseology, through those forms where it is used in a manner peculiar to our language, or in senses not to be comprised in the general explanations; as from the verb *make* arise these phrases, to *make love*, to *make an end*, to *make way*; as, he *made way* for his followers, the ship *made way* before the wind; to *make a bed*, to *make merry*, to *make a mock*, to *make presents*, to *make a doubt*, to *make out an assertion*, to *make good* a breach, to *make good* a cause, to *make nothing* of an attempt, to *make lamentation*, to *make a merit*, and many others which will occur in reading with that view, and which only their frequency hinders from being generally remarked.

The great labour is yet to come, the labour of interpreting these words and phrases with brevity, fulness, and perspicuity; a task of which the extent and intricacy is sufficiently shewn by the miscarriage of those who have generally attempted it. This difficulty is increased by the necessity of explaining the words in the same language; for there is often only one word for one idea; and though it be easy to translate the words *bright*, *sweet*, *salt*, *bitter*, into another language, it is not easy to explain them.

With regard to the interpretation, many other questions have required consideration. It was some time doubted whether it be necessary to explain the things implied by particular words; as under the term *baronet*, whether, instead of this explanation, *a title of honour next in degree to that of baron*, it would be better to mention more particularly the creation, privileges, and rank of baronets; and whether, under the word *barometer*, instead of being satisfied with observing that it is *an instrument to discover the weight of the air*, it would be fit to spend a few lines upon its invention, construction, and principles. It is not to be expected, that with the explanation of the one the herald should be satisfied, or the philosopher with that of the other; but since it will be required by common readers, that the explications should be sufficient for common use; and since, without some attention to such demands, the Dictionary cannot become generally valuable, I have determined to consult the best writers for explanations real as well as verbal; and perhaps I may at last have reason to say, after one of the augmenters of Furetier, that my book is more learned than its author.

In explaining the general and popular language, it seems necessary to sort the several senses of each word, and to exhibit first its natural and primitive signification; as,

To *arrive*, to reach the shore in a voyage: he *arrived* at a safe harbour.

Then to give its consequential meaning, to *arrive*, to reach any place, whether by land or sea; as, he *arrived* at his country seat.

Then its metaphorical sense, to obtain any thing desired; as, he *arrived* at a peerage.

Then to mention any observation that arises from the comparison of one meaning with another; as, it may be remarked of the word *arrive*, that, in consequence of its original and etymological sense, it cannot be properly applied but to words signifying something desirable: thus we say, a man *arrived* at happiness; but cannot say, without a mixture of irony, he *arrived* at misery.

Ground, the earth, generally as opposed to the air or water. He swam till he reached *ground*. The bird fell to the *ground*.

Then follows the accidental or consequential signification in which *ground* implies any thing that lies under another; as, he laid colours upon a rough *ground*. The silk had blue flowers on a red *ground*.

Then the remoter or metaphorical signification; as the *ground* of his opinion was a false computation. The *ground* of his work was his father's manuscript.

After having gone through the natural and figurative senses, it will be proper to subjoin the poetical sense of each word, where it differs from that which is in common use; as *wanton*, applied to any thing of which the motion is irregular without terror; as,

In *wanton* ringlets curl'd her hair.

To the poetical sense may succeed the familiar; as of *toast*, used to imply the person whose health is drank; as,

The wise man's passion, and the vain man's *toast*. POPE.

The familiar may be followed by the burlesque; as of *mellow*, applied to good fellowship:

In all thy humours, whether grave or *mellow*. ADDISON.

Or of *bite*, used for *cheat:*

—— More a dupe than wit,
Sappho can tell you how this man was *bit*. POPE.

And lastly, may be produced the peculiar sense, in which a word is found in any great author: as *faculties*, in Shakspeare, signifies the powers of authority:

—— This Duncan
Has borne his *faculties* so meek, has been
So clear in his great office, that, &c.

The signification of adjectives may be often ascertained by uniting them to substantives; as, *simple swain, simple sheep*. Sometimes the sense of a substantive may be elucidated by the epithets annexed to it in good authors; as, the *boundless ocean*, the *open lawns:* and where such advantage can be gained by a short quotation, it is not to be omitted.

The difference of signification in words generally accounted synonimous, ought to be carefully observed; as in *pride, haughtiness, arrogance:* and the strict and critical meaning ought to be distinguished from that which is loose and popular; as in the word *perfection*, which, though in its philosophical and exact sense it can be of little use among [illegible] beings, is often so much degraded from its

original signification, that the academicians have inserted in their work, the *perfection* of a language, and, with a little more licentiousness, might have prevailed on themselves to have added *the perfection of a dictionary.*

There are many other characters of words which it will be of use to mention. Some have both an active and passive signification; as *fearful*, that which gives or which feels terror; a *fearful prodigy*, a *fearful hare.* Some have a personal, some a real meaning; as in opposition to *old*, we use the adjective *young*, of animated beings, and *new* of other things. Some are restrained to the sense of praise, and others to that of disapprobation; so commonly though not always, we *exhort* to good actions, we *instigate* to ill; we *animate*, *incite*, and *encourage* indifferently to good or bad. So we usually *ascribe* good but *impute* evil; yet neither the use of these words, nor, perhaps, of any other in our licentious language, is so established as not to be often reversed by the correctest writers. I shall therefore, since the rules of stile, like those of law, arise from precedents often repeated, collect the testimonies on both sides, and endeavour to discover and promulgate the decrees of custom, who has so long possessed, whether by right or by usurpation, the sovereignty of words.

It is necessary likewise to explain many words by their opposition to others; for contraries are best seen when they stand together. Thus the verb *stand* has one sense, as opposed to *fall*, and another as opposed to *fly*; for want of attending to which distinction, obvious as it is, the learned Dr. Bentley has squan-

dered his criticism to no purpose, on these lines of Paradise Lost:

—— In heaps
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery foaming steeds. What *stood, recoil'd,*
O'erwearied, through the faint satanic host,
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
Fled ignominious ———

" Here," says the critic, " as the sentence is now read, we find that what *stood, fled:*" and therefore he proposes an alteration, which he might have spared if he had consulted a dictionary, and found that nothing more was affirmed than that those *fled* who did *not fall.*

In explaining such meanings as seem accidental and adventitious, I shall endeavour to give an account of the means by which they were introduced. Thus, to *eke out* any thing, signifies to lengthen it beyond its just dimensions, by some low artifice; because the word *eke* was the usual refuge of our old writers, when they wanted a syllable. And *buxom*, which means only *obedient*, is now made, in familiar phrases, to stand for *wanton;* because in an ancient form of marriage, before the Reformation, the bride promised complaisance and obedience, in these terms: " I will be bonair and *buxom* in bed and at board."

I know well, my Lord, how trifling many of these remarks will appear separately considered, and how easily they may give occasion to the contemptuous merriment of sportive idleness, and the gloomy censures of arrogant stupidity; but dulness it is easy to despise, and laughter it is easy to repay. I shall not be solicitous what is thought of my work by such as

know not the difficulty or importance of philological studies; nor shall think those that have done nothing, qualified to condemn me for doing little. It may not, however, be improper to remind them, that no terrestrial greatness is more than an aggregate of little things; and to inculcate, after the Arabian proverb, that drops, added to drops, constitute the ocean.

There remains yet to be considered the distribution of words into their proper classes, or that part of lexicography which is strictly critical.

The popular part of the language, which includes all words not appropriated to particular sciences, admits of many distinctions and subdivisions; as, into words of general use, words employed chiefly in poetry, words obsolete, words which are admitted only by particular writers, yet not in themselves improper; words used only in burlesque writing; and words impure and barbarous.

Words of general use will be known by having no sign of particularity, and their various senses will be supported by authorities of all ages.

The words appropriated to poetry will be distinguished by some mark prefixed, or will be known by having no authorities but those of poets.

Of antiquated or obsolete words, none will be inserted but such as are to be found in authors who wrote since the accession of Elizabeth, from which we date the golden age of our language; and of these many might be omitted, but that the reader may require, with an appearance of reason, that no difficulty should be left unresolved in books which he finds himself invited to read, as cc

and established models of stile. These will be likewise pointed out by some note of exclusion, but not of disgrace.

The words which are found only in particular books, will be known by the single name of him that has used them; but such will be omitted, unless either their propriety, elegance, or force, or the reputation of their authors, affords some extraordinary reason for their reception.

Words used in burlesque and familiar compositions, will be likewise mentioned with their proper authorities; such as *dudgeon*, from Butler, and *leasing*, from Prior; and will be diligently characterised by marks of distinction.

Barbarous, or impure words and expressions, may be branded with some note of infamy, as they are carefully to be eradicated wherever they are found; and they occur too frequently even in the best writers: as in Pope,

——*in* endless error hurl'd.
'*Tis these* that early taint the female soul.

In Addison:

Attend to what a *lesser* muse indites.

And in Dryden,

A dreadful quiet felt, and *worser* far
Than arms———

If this part of the Work can be well performed, it will be equivalent to the proposal made by Boileau to the academicians, that they should review all their polite writers, and correct such impurities as might be found in them, that their authority might not contribute, at any distant time, to the depravation of the language.

With regard to questions of purity or propriety, I was once in doubt whether I should not attribute too much to myself, in attempting to decide them, and whether my province was to extend beyond the proposition of the question, and the display of the suffrages on each side; but I have been since determined, by your Lordship's opinion, to interpose my own judgment, and shall therefore endeavour to support what appears to me most consonant to grammar and reason. Ausonius thought that modesty forbad him to plead inability for a task to which Cæsar had judged him equal.

Cur me posse negem, posse quod ille putat?

And I may hope, my Lord, that since you, whose authority in our language is so generally acknowledged, have commissioned me to declare my own opinion, I shall be considered as exercising a kind of vicarious jurisdiction, and that the power which might have been denied to my own claim, will be readily allowed me as the delegate of your Lordship.

In citing authorities, on which the credit of every part of this Work must depend, it will be proper to observe some obvious rules; such as of preferring writers of the first reputation to those of an inferior rank; of noting the quotations with accuracy; and of selecting, when it can be conveniently done, such sentences, as, besides their immediate use, may give pleasure or instruction, by conveying some elegance of language, or some precept of prudence, or piety.

It has been asked, on some occasions, who shall judge the judges? And since, with regard to this design, a question may arise by what authority the

authorities are selected, it is necessary to obviate it, by declaring that many of the writers whose testimonies will be alledged, were selected by Mr. Pope; of whom I may be justified in affirming, that were he still alive, solicitous as he was for the success of this work, he would not be displeased that I have undertaken it.

It will be proper that the quotations be ranged according to the ages of their authors; and it will afford an agreeable amusement, if to the words and phrases which are not of our own growth, the name of the writer who first introduced them can be affixed; and if to words which are now antiquated, the authority be subjoined of him who last admitted them. Thus, for *scathe* and *buxom*, now obsolete, Milton may be cited,

——The mountain oak
Stands *scath'd* to heaven———
——He with broad sails
Winnow'd the *buxom* air———

By this method every word will have its history, and the reader will be informed of the gradual changes of the language, and have before his eyes the rise of some words, and the fall of others. But observations so minute and accurate are to be desired, rather than expected; and if use be carefully supplied, curiosity must sometimes bear its disappointments.

This, my Lord, is my idea of an English Dictionary; a dictionary by which the pronunciation of our language may be fixed, and its attainment facilitated; by which its purity may be preserved, its use ascertained, and its duration lengthened.

And though, perhaps, to correct the language of nations by books of grammar, and amend their manners by discourses of morality, may be tasks equally difficult; yet, as it is unavoidable to wish, it is natural likewise to hope, that your Lordship's patronage may not be wholly lost; that it may contribute to the preservation of ancient, and the improvement of modern writers; that it may promote the reformation of those translators, who, for want of understanding the characteristical difference of tongues, have formed a chaotic dialect of heterogeneous phrases; and awaken to the care of purer diction some men of genius, whose attention to argument makes them negligent of stile, or whose rapid imagination, like the Peruvian torrents, when it brings down gold, mingles it with sand.

When I survey the Plan which I have laid before you, I cannot, my Lord, but confess, that I am frighted at its extent, and, like the soldiers of Cæsar, look on Britain as a new world, which it is almost madness to invade. But I hope, that though I should not complete the conquest, I shall at least discover the coast, civilize part of the inhabitants, and make it easy for some other adventurer to proceed farther, to reduce them wholly to subjection, and settle them under laws.

We are taught by the great Roman orator, that every man should propose to himself the highest degree of excellence, but that he may stop with honour at the second or third: though therefore my performance should fall below the excellence of other dictionaries, I may obtain, at least, the praise of having endeavoured well; nor shall I

think it any reproach to my diligence, that I have retired without a triumph, from a contest with united academies, and long successions of learned compilers. I cannot hope, in the warmest moments, to preserve so much caution through so long a work, as not often to sink into negligence, or to obtain so much knowledge of all its parts as not frequently to fail by ignorance. I expect that sometimes the desire of accuracy will urge me to superfluities, and sometimes the fear of prolixity betray me to omissions: that in the extent of such variety, I shall be often bewildered; and in the mazes of such intricacy, be frequently entangled: that in one part refinement will be subtilized beyond exactness, and evidence dilated in another beyond perspicuity. Yet I do not despair of approbation from those who, knowing the uncertainty of conjecture, the scantiness of knowledge, the fallibility of memory, and the unsteadiness of attention, can compare the causes of error with the means of avoiding it, and the extent of art with the capacity of man; and whatever be the event of my endeavours, I shall not easily regret an attempt which has procured me the honour of appearing thus publicly,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

and most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON*.

* Written in the year 1747. C.

PREFACE

TO THE

ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

It is the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life, to be rather driven by the fear of evil, than attracted by the prospect of good; to be exposed to censure, without hope of praise; to be disgraced by miscarriage, or punished for neglect, where success would have been without applause, and diligence without reward.

Among these unhappy mortals is the writer of dictionaries; whom mankind have considered, not as the pupil, but the slave of science, the pioneer of literature, doomed only to remove rubbish and clear obstructions from the paths through which Learning and Genius press forward to conquest and glory, without bestowing a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress. Every other author may aspire to praise; the lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach, and even this negative recompence has been yet granted to very few.

I have, notwithstanding this discouragement, attempted a Dictionary of the English language,

which, while it was employed in the cultivation of every species of literature, has itself been hitherto neglected; suffered to spread, under the direction of chance, into wild exuberance; resigned to the tyranny of time and fashion; and exposed to the corruptions of ignorance, and caprices of innovation.

When I took the first survey of my undertaking, I found our speech copious without order, and energetick without rule: wherever I turned my view, there was perplexity to be disentangled and confusion to be regulated; choice was to be made out of boundless variety, without any established principle of selection; adulterations were to be detected, without a settled test of purity; and modes of expression to be rejected or received, without the suffrages of any writers of classical reputation or acknowledged authority.

Having therefore no assistance but from general grammar, I applied myself to the perusal of our writers; and noting whatever might be of use to ascertain or illustrate any word or phrase, accumulated in time the materials of a dictionary, which, by degrees, I reduced to method, establishing to myself, in the progress of the work, such rules as experience and analogy suggested to me; experience, which practice and observation were continually increasing; and analogy, which, though in some words obscure, was evident in others.

In adjusting the *Orthography*, which has been to this time unsettled and fortuitous, I found it necessary to distinguish those irregularities that are inherent in our tongue, and perhaps coëval with it,

from others which the ignorance or negligence of later writers has produced. Every language has its anomalies, which though inconvenient, and in themselves once unnecessary, must be tolerated among the imperfections of human things, and which require only to be registered, that they may not be increased, and ascertained, that they may not be confounded: but every language has likewise its improprieties and absurdities, which it is the duty of the lexicographer to correct or proscribe.

As language was at its beginning merely oral, all words of necessary or common use were spoken before they were written; and while they were unfixed by any visible signs, must have been spoken with great diversity, as we now observe those who cannot read to catch sounds imperfectly, and utter them negligently. When this wild and barbarous jargon was first reduced to an alphabet, every penman endeavoured to express, as he could, the sounds which he was accustomed to pronounce or to receive, and vitiated in writing such words as were already vitiated in speech. The powers of the letters, when they were applied to a new language must have been vague and unsettled, and therefore different hands would exhibit the same sound by different combinations.

From this uncertain pronunciation arise in a great part the various dialects of the same country, which will always be observed to grow fewer, and less different, as books are multiplied; and from this arbitrary representation of sounds by letters proceeds that diversity of spelling, observable in the Saxon remains, and I suppose in the first books

of every nation, which perplexes or destroys analogy, and produces anomalous formations, which, being once incorporated, can never be afterward dismissed or reformed.

Of this kind are the derivatives *length* from *long*, *strength* from *strong*, *darling* from *dear*, *breadth* from *broad*, from *dry*, *drought*, and from *high*, *height*, which Milton, in zeal for analogy, writes *highth*: *Quid te exempta juvat spinis de pluribus una?* to change all would be too much, and to change one is nothing.

This uncertainty is most frequent in the vowels, which are so capriciously pronounced, and so differently modified, by accident or affectation, not only in every province, but in every mouth, that to them, as is well known to etymologists, little regard is to be shewn in the deduction of one language from another.

Such defects are not errours in orthography, but spots of barbarity impressed so deep in the English language, that criticism can never wash them away: these, therefore, must be permitted to remain untouched; but many words have likewise been altered by accident, or depraved by ignorance, as the pronunciation of the vulgar has been weakly followed; and some still continue to be variously written, as authors differ in their care or skill: of these it was proper to enquire the true orthography, which I have always considered as depending on their derivation, and have therefore referred them to their original languages: thus I write *enchant*, *enchantment*, *enchanter*, after the French, and *incantation* after the Latin; thus *entire* is chosen rather than

intire, because it passed to us not from the Latin *integer*, but from the French *entier*.

Of many words it is difficult to say whether they were immediately received from the Latin or the French, since at the time when we had dominions in France, we had Latin service in our churches. It is, however, my opinion, that the French generally supplied us; for we have few Latin words, among the terms of domestick use, which are not French; but many French, which are very remote from Latin.

Even in words of which the derivation is apparent, I have been often obliged to sacrifice uniformity to custom; thus I write, in compliance with a numberless majority, *convey* and *inveigh*, *deceit* and *receipt*, *fancy* and *phantom*; sometimes the derivative varies from the primitive, as *explain* and *explanation*, *repeat*, and *repetition*.

Some combinations of letters having the same power, are used indifferently without any discoverable reason of choice, as in *choak*, *choke*; *soap*, *sope*; *fewel*, *fuel*, and many others; which I have sometimes inserted twice, that those who search for them under either form, may not search in vain.

In examining the orthography of any doubtful word, the mode of spelling by which it is inserted in the series of the dictionary, is to be considered as that to which I give, perhaps not often rashly, the preference. I have left, in the examples, to every author his own practice unmolested, that the reader may balance suffrages, and judge between us: but this question is not always to be determined by reputed or by real learning; some men, intent

upon greater things, have thought little on sounds and derivations; some, knowing in the ancient tongues, have neglected those in which our words are commonly to be sought. Thus Hammond writes *fecibleness* for *feasibleness*, because I suppose he imagined it derived immediately from the Latin; and some words, such as *dependant, dependent; dependance, dependence*, vary their final syllable, as one or other language is present to the writer.

In this part of the work, where caprice has long wantoned without control, and vanity sought praise by petty reformation, I have endeavoured to proceed with a scholar's reverence for antiquity, and a grammarian's regard to the genius of our tongue. I have attempted few alterations, and among those few, perhaps the greater part is from the modern to the ancient practice; and I hope I may be allowed to recommend to those, whose thoughts have been perhaps employed too anxiously on verbal singularities, not to disturb, upon narrow views, or for minute propriety, the orthography of their fathers. It has been asserted, that for the law to be *known*, is of more importance than to be *right*. "Change," says Hooker, "is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better." There is in constancy and stability a general and lasting advantage, which will always overbalance the slow improvements of gradual correction. Much less ought our written language to comply with the corruptions of oral utterance, or copy that which every variation of time or place makes different from itself, and imitate those changes, which will again be changed, while imitation is employed in observing them.

This recommendation of steadiness and uniformity does not proceed from an opinion that particular combinations of letters have much influence on human happiness; or that truth may not be successfully taught by modes of spelling fanciful and erroneous; I am not yet so lost in lexicography as to forget that *words are the daughters of earth, and that things are the sons of heaven.* Language is only the instrument of science, and words are but the signs of ideas: I wish, however, that the instrument might be less apt to decay, and that signs might be permanent, like the things which they denote.

In settling the orthography, I have not wholly neglected the pronunciation, which I have directed, by printing an accent upon the acute or elevated syllable. It will sometimes be found that the accent is placed by the author quoted, on a different syllable from that marked in the alphabetical series; it is then to be understood, that custom has varied, or that the author has, in my opinion, pronounced wrong. Short directions are sometimes given where the sound of letters is irregular; and if they are sometimes omitted, defect in such minute observations will be more easily excused, than superfluity.

In the investigation both of the orthography and signification of words, their *Etymology* was necessarily to be considered, and they were therefore to be divided into primitives and derivatives. A primitive word, is that which can be traced no further to any English root; thus *circumspect, circumvent, circumstance, delude, concave,* and *complicate,* though compounds in the Latin, are to us primitives.

Derivatives, are all those that can be referred to any word in English of greater simplicity.

The derivatives I have referred to their primitives, with an accuracy sometimes needless; for who does not see that *remoteness* comes from *remote*, *lovely* from *love*, *concavity* from *concave*, and *demonstrative* from *demonstrate*? But this grammatical exuberance the scheme of my work did not allow me to repress. It is of great importance, in examining the general fabrick of a language, to trace one word from another, by noting the usual modes of derivation and inflection; and uniformity must be preserved in systematical works; though sometimes at the expence of particular propriety.

Among other derivatives I have been careful to insert and elucidate the anomalous plurals of nouns and preterites of verbs, which in the Teutonick dialects are very frequent, and, though familiar to those who have always used them, interrupt and embarrass the learners of our language.

The two languages from which our primitives have been derived are the Roman and Teutonick: under the Roman I comprehend the French and provincial tongues; and under the Teutonick range the Saxon, German, and all their kindred dialects. Most of our polysyllables are Roman, and our words of one syllable are very often Teutonick.

In assigning the Roman original, it has perhaps sometimes happened that I have mentioned only the Latin, when the word was borrowed from the French; and considering myself as employed only in the illustration of my own language, I have not been very careful to observe whether the Latin

word be pure or barbarous, or the French elegant or obsolete.

For the Teutonick etymologies, I am commonly indebted to Junius and Skinner, the only names which I have forborne to quote when I copied their books; not that I might appropriate their labours or usurp their honours, but that I might spare a perpetual repetition by one general acknowledgment. Of these, whom I ought not to mention but with the reverence due to instructors and benefactors, Junius appears to have excelled in extent of learning, and Skinner in rectitude of understanding. Junius was accurately skilled in all the northern languages, Skinner probably examined the ancient and remoter dialects only by occasional inspection into dictionaries; but the learning of Junius is often of no other use than to shew him a track by which he may deviate from his purpose, to which Skinner always presses forward by the shortest way. Skinner is often ignorant, but never ridiculous: Junius is always full of knowledge; but his variety distracts his judgment, and his learning is very frequently disgraced by his absurdities.

The votaries of the northern muses will not perhaps easily restrain their indignation, when they find the name of Junius thus degraded by a disadvantageous comparison; but whatever reverence is due to his diligence, or his attainments, it can be no criminal degree of censoriousness to charge that etymologist with want of judgment, who can seriously derive *dream* from *drama*, because *life is a drama and a drama is a dream;* and who declares with a tone of defiance, that no man can fail to derive

moan from μονος, *monos, single* or *solitary*, who considers that grief naturally loves to be alone*.

Our knowledge of the northern literature is so scanty, that of words undoubtedly Teutonick, the original is not always to be found in any ancient

* That I may not appear to have spoken too irreverently of *Junius*, I have here subjoined a few specimens of his etymological extravagance.

BANISH, *religare, ex banno vel territorio exigere, in exilium agere.* G. *bannir.* It. *bandire, bandeggiare.* H. *bandir.* B. bannen. Ævi medii scriptores bannire dicebant. V. Spelm. in Bannum & in Banleuga. Quoniam verò regionum urbiumq; limites arduis plerumq; montibus, altis fluminibus, longis deniq; flexuosisq; angustissimarum viarum amfractibus includebantur, fieri potest id genus limites *ban* dici ab eo quod Βαννάται & Βάνναται Tarentinis olim, sicuti tradit Hesychius, vocabantur *αἱ λοξοὶ καὶ μὴ ἰθυτενεῖς ὁδοι*, "obliquæ ac minimè in rectum tendentes viæ." Ac fortasse quoque huc facit quod Βανοὺς, eodem Hesychio teste, dicebant *ὄρη στραγγύλη*, montes arduos.

EMPTY, emtie, *vacuus, inanis.* A. S. Æmtiȝ. Nescio an sint ab *ἐμέω* vel *ἐμεταίω*. Vomo, evomo, vomitu evacuo. Videtur interim etymologiam hanc non obscurè firmare codex Rush. Mat. xii. 22. ubi antiquè scriptum invenimus ȝemoeteb hit emetiȝ. "Invenit eam vacantem."

HILL, *mons, collis.* A. S. hỳll. Quod videri potest abscissum ex κολώνη vel κολωνὸς. Collis, tumulus, locus in plano editior. Hom. Il. b. v. 811. *ἔστι δέ τις προπάροιθε πόλεος ἀπειὴ κολώνη.* Ubi authori brevium scholiorum κολώνη exp. *τόπος εἰς ὕψος ἀνήκων, γεώλοφος ἐξοχή.*

NAP, *to take a nap. Dormire, condormiscere.* Cym, heppian. A. S. hnæppan. Quod postremum videri potest desumptum ex *κνέφας*, obscuritas, tenebræ: nihil enim æque solet conciliare somnum, quàm caliginosa profundæ noctis obscuritas.

STAMMERER, Balbus, blæsus. Goth. STAMMS. A. S. ꝑtamep, ꝑtamuꝑ. D. stam. B. stameler. Su. stamma. Isl. stamr. Sunt a *στωμυλειν* vel *στωὐμλλειν*, nimiâ loquacitate alios offendere; quod impeditè loquentes libentissimè garrire soleant; vel quòd aliis nimii semper videantur, etiam parcissimè loquentes.

language; and I have therefore inserted Dutch or German substitutes, which I consider not as radical, but parallel, not as the parents, but sisters of the English.

The words which are represented as thus related by descent or cognation, do not always agree in sense; for it is incident to words, as to their authors, to degenerate from their ancestors, and to change their manners when they change their country. It is sufficient, in etymological enquiries, if the senses of kindred words be found such as may easily pass into each other, or such as may both be referred to one general idea.

The etymology, so far as it is yet known, was easily found in the volumes, where it is particularly and professedly delivered; and, by proper attention to the rules of derivation, the orthography was soon adjusted. But to *collect* the *Words* of our language was a task of greater difficulty: the deficiency of dictionaries was immediately apparent; and when they were exhausted, what was yet wanting must be sought by fortuitous and unguided excursions into books, and gleaned as industry should find, or chance should offer it, in the boundless chaos of a living speech. My search, however, has been either skilful or lucky; for I have much augmented the vocabulary.

As my desigu was a dictionary, common or appellative, I have omitted all words which have relation to proper names; such as *Arian, Socinian, Calvinist, Benedictine, Mahometan;* but have retained those of a more general nature, as *Heathen, Pagan.*

Of the terms of art I have received such as could be found either in books of science or technical dictionaries; and have often inserted, from philosophical writers, words which are supported perhaps only by a single authority, and which being not admitted into general use, stand yet as candidates or probationers, and must depend for their adoption on the suffrage of futurity.

The words which our authors have introduced by their knowledge of foreign languages, or ignorance of their own, by vanity or wantonness, by compliance with fashion or lust of innovation, I have registered as they occurred, though commonly only to censure them, and warn others against the folly of naturalizing useless foreigners to the injury of the natives.

I have not rejected any by design, merely because they were unnecessary or exuberant; but have received those which by different writers have been differently formed, as *viscid*, and *viscidity*, *viscous*, and *viscosity*.

Compounded or double words I have seldom noted, except when they obtain a signification different from that which the components have in their simple state. Thus *highwayman*, *woodman*, and *horsecourser*, require an explanation; but of *thieflike*, or *coachdriver*, no notice was needed, because the primitives contain the meaning of the compounds.

Words arbitrarily formed by a constant and settled analogy, like diminutive adjectives in *ish*, as *greenish*, *bluish*; adverbs in *ly*, as *dully*, *openly*; substantives in *ness*, as *vileness*, *faultiness*; were less diligently sought, and many sometimes have

been omitted, when I had no authority that invited me to insert them; not that they are not genuine and regular offsprings of English roots, but because their relation to the primitive being always the same, their signification cannot be mistaken.

The verbal nouns in *ing*, such as the *keeping* of the *castle*, the *leading* of the *army*, are always neglected, or placed only to illustrate the sense of the verb, except when they signify things as well as actions, and have therefore a plural number, as *dwelling*, *living*; or have an absolute and abstract signification, as *colouring*, *painting*, *learning*.

The participles are likewise omitted, unless, by signifying rather habit or quality than action, they take the nature of adjectives; as a *thinking* man, a man of prudence; a *pacing* horse, a horse that can pace: these I have ventured to call *participial adjectives*. But neither are these always inserted, because they are commonly to be understood without any danger of mistake, by consulting the verb.

Obsolete words are admitted when they are found in authors not obsolete, or when they have any force or beauty that may deserve revival.

As composition is one of the chief characteristicks of a language, I have endeavoured to make some reparation for the universal negligence of my predecessors, by inserting great numbers of compounded words, as may be found under *after*, *fore*, *new*, *night*, *fair*, and many more. These, numerous as they are, might be multiplied, but that use and curiosity are here satisfied, and the frame of our language and modes of our combination amply discovered.

Of some forms of composition, such as that by which *re* is prefixed to note *repetition*, and *un* to signify *contrariety* or *privation*, all the examples, cannot be accumulated, because the use of these particles, if not wholly arbitrary, is so little limited, that they are hourly affixed to new words as occasion requires, or is imagined to require them.

There is another kind of composition more frequent in our language than perhaps in any other, from which arises to foreigners the greatest difficulty. We modify the signification of many verbs by a particle subjoined; as to *come off*, to escape by a fetch; to *fall on*, to attack; to *fall off*, to apostatize; to *break off*, to stop abruptly; to *bear out*, to justify; to *fall in*, to comply; to *give over*, to cease; to *set off*, to embellish; to *set in*, to begin a continual tenour; to *set out*, to begin a course or journey; to *take off*, to copy; with innumerable expressions of the same kind, of which some appear wildly irregular, being so far distant from the sense of the simple words, that no sagacity will be able to trace the steps by which they arrived at the present use. These I have noted with great care; and though I cannot flatter myself that the collection is complete, I believe I have so far assisted the students of our language that this kind of phraseology will be no longer insuperable; and the combinations of verbs and particles, by chance omitted, will be easily explained by comparison with those that may be found.

Many words yet stand supported only by the name of Bailey, Ainsworth, Philips, or the contracted *Dict.* for Dictionaries, subjoined; of these I am not always certain that they are read in any book but

the works of lexicographers. Of such I have omitted many, because I had never read them; and many I have inserted, because they may perhaps exist, though they have escaped my notice: they are, however, to be yet considered as resting only upon the credit of former dictionaries. Others, which I considered as useful, or know to be proper, though I could not at present support them by authorities, I have suffered to stand upon my own attestation, claiming the same privilege with my predecessors, of being sometimes credited without proof.

The words, thus selected and disposed, are grammatically considered; they are referred to the different parts of speech; traced when they are irregularly inflected, through their various terminations; and illustrated by observations, not indeed of great or striking importance, separately considered, but necessary to the elucidation of our language, and hitherto neglected or forgotten by English grammarians.

That part of my work on which I expect malignity most frequently to fasten, is the *explanation*; in which I cannot hope to satisfy those, who are perhaps not inclined to be pleased, since I have not always been able to satisfy myself. To interpret a language by itself is very difficult; many words cannot be explained by synonimes, because the idea signified by them has not more than one appellation; nor by paraphrase, because simple ideas cannot be described. When the nature of things is unknown, or the notion unsettled and indefinite, and various in various minds, the words by which such notions are conveyed, or such things denoted, will be am-

biguous and perplexed. And such is the fate of hapless lexicography, that not only darkness, but light, impedes and distresses it; things may be not only too little, but too much known, to be happily illustrated. To explain, requires the use of terms less abstruse than that which is to be explained, and such terms cannot always be found; for as nothing can be proved but by supposing something intuitively known, and evident without proof, so nothing can be defined but by the use of words too plain to admit a definition.

Other words there are, of which the sense is too subtle and evanescent to be fixed in a paraphrase; such are all those which are by the grammarians termed expletives, and, in dead languages, are suffered to pass for empty sounds, of no other use than to fill a verse, or to modulate a period, but which are easily perceived in living tongues to have power and emphasis, though it be sometimes such as no other form of expression can convey.

My labour has likewise been much increased by a class of verbs too frequent in the English language, of which the signification is so loose and general, the use so vague and indeterminate, and the senses detorted so widely from the first idea, that it is hard to trace them through the maze of variation, to catch them on the brink of utter inanity, to circumscribe them by any limitations, or interpret them by any words of distinct and settled meaning; such are *bear, break, come, cast, full, get, give, do, put, set, go, run, make, take, turn, throw.* If of these the whole power is not accurately delivered, it must be remembered, that while our language is yet living,

and variable by the caprice of every one that speaks it, these words are hourly shifting their relations, and can no more be ascertained in a dictionary, than a grove, in the agitation of a storm, can be accurately delineated from its picture in the water.

The particles are among all nations applied with so great latitude, that they are not easily reducible under any regular scheme of explication: this difficulty is not less, nor perhaps greater, in English, than in other languages. I have laboured them with diligence, I hope with success; such at least as can be expected in a task, which no man, however learned or sagacious, has yet been able to perform.

Some words there are which I cannot explain, because I do not understand them; these might have been omitted very often with little inconvenience, but I would not so far indulge my vanity as to decline this confession: for when Tully owns himself ignorant whether *lessus*, in the twelve tables, means a *funeral song*, or *mourning garment*; and Aristotle doubts whether οὖρευς in the Iliad signifies a *mule*, or *muleteer*, I may surely without shame, leave some obscurities to happier industry, or future information.

The rigour of interpretative lexicography requires that *the explanation*, and *the word explained should be always reciprocal;* this I have always endeavoured, but could not always attain. Words are seldom exactly synonimous; a new term was not introduced, but because the former was thought inadequate: names, therefore, have often many ideas, but few ideas have many names. It was then necessary to use the proximate word, for the deficiency of

single terms can very seldom be supplied by circumlocution; nor is the inconvenience great of such mutilated interpretations, because the sense may easily be collected entire from the examples.

In every word of extensive use, it was requisite to mark the progress of its meaning, and shew by what gradations of intermediate sense it has passed from its primitive to its remote and accidental signification; so that every foregoing explanation should tend to that which follows, and the series be regularly concatenated from the first notion to the last.

This is specious, but not always practicable; kindred senses may be so interwoven, that the perplexity cannot be disentangled, nor any reason be assigned why one should be ranged before the other. When the radical idea branches out into parallel ramifications, how can a consecutive series be formed of senses in their nature collateral? The shades of meaning sometimes pass imperceptibly into each other, so that though on one side they apparently differ, yet it is impossible to mark the point of contact. Ideas of the same race, though not exactly alike, are sometimes so little different, that no words can express the dissimilitude, though the mind easily perceives it when they are exhibited together; and sometimes there is such a confusion of acceptations, that discernment is wearied and distinction puzzled, and perseverance herself hurries to an end, by crowding together what she cannot separate.

These complaints of difficulty will, by those that have never considered words beyond their popular use, be thought only the jargon of a man willing to magnify his labours, and procure veneration to his

studies by involution and obscurity. But every art is obscure to those that have not learned it; this uncertainty of terms, and commixture of ideas, is well known to those who have joined philosophy with grammar; and if I have not expressed them very clearly, it must be remembered that I am speaking of that which words are insufficient to explain.

The original sense of words is often driven out of use by their metaphorical acceptations, yet must be inserted for the sake of a regular origination. Thus I know not whether *ardour* is used for *material heat*, or whether *flagrant*, in English, ever signifies the same with *burning*; yet such are the primitive ideas of these words, which are therefore set first, though without examples, that the figurative senses may be commodiously deduced.

Such is the exuberance of signification which many words have obtained, that it was scarcely possible to collect all their senses; sometimes the meaning of derivatives must be sought in the mother term, and sometimes deficient explanations of the primitive may be supplied in the train of derivation. In any case of doubt or difficulty, it will be always proper to examine all the words of the same race; for some words are slightly passed over to avoid repetition, some admitted easier and clearer explanation than others, and all will be better understood, as they are considered in greater variety of structures and relations.

All the interpretations of words are not written with the same skill, or the same happiness: things equally easy in themselves, are not all equally easy to any single mind. Every writer of a long work

commits errors, where there appears neither ambiguity to mislead, nor obscurity to confound him; and in a search like this, many felicities of expression will be casually overlooked, many convenient parallels will be forgotten, and many particulars will admit improvement from a mind utterly unequal to the whole performance.

But many seeming faults are to be imputed rather to the nature of the undertaking, than the negligence of the performer. Thus some explanations are unavoidably reciprocal or circular, as *hind, the female of the stag; stag, the male of the hind:* sometimes easier words are changed into harder, as *burial* into *sepulture*, or *interment, drier* into *desiccative, dryness* into *siccity* or *aridity, fit* into *paroxysm;* for the easiest word, whatever it be, can never be translated into one more easy. But easiness and difficulty are merely relative; and if the present prevalence of our language should invite foreigners to this Dictionary, many will be assisted by those words which now seem only to increase or produce obscurity. For this reason I have endeavoured frequently to join a Teutonick and Roman interpretation, as to *cheer*, to *gladden*, or *exhilarate*, that every learner of English may be assisted by his own tongue.

The solution of all difficulties, and the supply of all defects must be sought in the examples, subjoined to the various senses of each word, and ranged according to the time of their authors.

When I first collected these authorities, I was desirous that every quotation should be useful to some other end than the illustration of a word; I ...efore extracted from philosophers principles of

science; from historians remarkable facts; from chymists complete processes; from divines striking exhortations; and from poets beautiful descriptions. Such is design, while it is yet at a distance from execution. When the time called upon me to range this accumulation of elegance and wisdom into an alphabetical series, I soon discovered that the bulk of my volumes would fright away the student, and was forced to depart from my scheme of including all that was pleasing or useful in English literature, and reduce my transcripts very often to clusters of words, in which scarcely any meaning is retained; thus to the weariness of copying, I was condemned to add the vexation of expunging. Some passages I have yet spared, which may relieve the labour of verbal searches, and intersperse with verdure and flowers the dusty desarts of barren philology.

The examples, thus mutilated, are no longer to be considered as conveying the sentiments or doctrine of their authors; the word for the sake of which they are inserted, with all its appendant clauses, has been carefully preserved; but it may sometimes happen, by hasty detruncation, that the general tendency of the sentence may be changed: the divine may desert his tenets, or the philosopher his system.

Some of the examples have been taken from writers who were never mentioned as masters of elegance, or models of style; but words must be sought where they are used; and in what pages, eminent for purity, can terms of manufacture or agriculture be found? Many quotations serve no

other purpose than that of proving the bare existence of words, and are therefore selected with less scrupulousness than those which are to teach their structures and relations.

My purpose was to admit no testimony of living authors, that I might not be misled by partiality, and that none of my contemporaries might have reason to complain; nor have I departed from this resolution, but when some performance of uncommon excellence excited my veneration, when my memory supplied me, from late books, with an example that was wanting, or when my heart, in the tenderness of friendship, solicited admission for a favourite name.

So far have I been from any care to grace my pages with modern decorations, that I have studiously endeavoured to collect examples and authorities from the writers before the Restoration, whose works I regard as *the wells of English undefiled*, as the pure sources of genuine diction. Our language, for almost a century, has, by the concurrence of many causes, been gradually departing from its original Teutonick character, and deviating towards a Gallick structure and phraseology, from which it ought to be our endeavour to recal it, by making our ancient volumes the ground-work of style, admitting among the additions of later times, only such as may supply real deficiencies, such as are readily adopted by the genius of our tongue, and incorporate easily with our native idioms.

But as every language has a time of rudeness antecedent to perfection, as well as of false refinement and declension, I have been cautious lest my zeal for [illegible]uity might drive me into times too re-

mote, and crowd my book with words now no longer understood. I have fixed Sidney's work for the boundary, beyond which I make few excursions. From the authors which rose in the time of Elizabeth, a speech might be formed adequate to all the purposes of use and elegance. If the language of theology were extracted from Hooker and the translation of the Bible; the terms of natural knowledge from Bacon; the phrases of policy, war, and navigation from Raleigh; the dialect of poetry and fiction from Spenser and Sidney; and the diction of common life from Shakespeare, few ideas would be lost to mankind, for want of English words, in which they might be expressed.

It is not sufficient that a word is found, unless it be so combined as that its meaning is apparently determined by the tract and tenour of the sentence; such passages I have therefore chosen, and when it happened that any author gave a definition of a term, or such an explanation as is equivalent to a definition, I have placed his authority as a supplement to my own, without regard to the chronological order, that is otherwise observed.

Some words, indeed, stand unsupported by any authority, but they are commonly derivative nouns or adverbs, formed from their primitives by regular and constant analogy, or names of things seldom occurring in books, or words of which I have reason to doubt the existence.

There is more danger of censure from the multiplicity than paucity of examples; authorities will sometimes seem to have been accumulated without necessity or use, and perhaps some will be found,

which might, without loss, have been omitted. But a work of this kind is not hastily to be charged with superfluities; those quotations, which to careless or unskilful perusers appear only to repeat the same sense, will often exhibit, to a more accurate examiner, diversities of signification, or, at least, afford different shades of the same meaning: one will shew the word applied to persons, another to things; one will express an ill, another a good, and a third a neutral sense; one will prove the expression genuine from an ancient author; another will shew it elegant from a modern: a doubtful authority is corroborated by another of more credit; an ambiguous sentence is ascertained by a passage clear and determinate: the word, how often soever repeated, appears with new associates and in different combinations, and every quotation contributes something to the stability or enlargement of the language.

When words are used equivocally, I receive them in either sense; when they are metaphorical, I adopt them in their primitive acceptation.

I have sometimes, though rarely, yielded to the temptation of exhibiting a genealogy of sentiments, by shewing how one author copied the thoughts and diction of another: such quotations are indeed little more than repetitions, which might justly be censured, did they not gratify the mind, by affording a kind of intellectual history.

The various syntactical structures occurring in the examples have been carefully noted; the licence or negligence with which many words have been hitherto used, has made our style capricious and indeterminate; when the different combinations of the

same word are exhibited together, the preference is readily given to propriety, and I have often endeavoured to direct the choice.

Thus have I laboured by settling the orthography, displaying the analogy, regulating the structures, and ascertaining the signification of English words, to perform all the parts of a faithful lexicographer: but I have not always executed my own scheme, or satisfied my own expectations. The work, whatever proofs of diligence and attention it may exhibit, is yet capable of many improvements: the orthography which I recommend is still controvertible; the etymology which I adopt is uncertain, and perhaps frequently erroneous; the explanations are sometimes too much contracted, and sometimes too much diffused, the significations are distinguished rather with subtilty than skill, and the attention is harassed with unnecessary minuteness

The examples are too often injudiciously truncated, and perhaps sometimes, I hope very rarely, alleged in a mistaken sense; for in making this collection I trusted more to memory, than, in a state of disquiet and embarrassment, memory can contain, and purposed to supply at the review what was left incomplete in the first transcription.

Many terms appropriated to particular occupations, though necessary and significant, are undoubtedly omitted; and of the words most studiously considered and exemplified, many senses have escaped observation.

Yet these failures, however frequent, may admit extenuation and apology. To have attempted much is always laudable, even when the enterprize

is above the strength that undertakes it: To rest below his own aim is incident to every one whose fancy is active, and whose views are comprehensive; nor is any man satisfied with himself because he has done much, but because he can conceive little. When first I engaged in this work, I resolved to leave neither words nor things unexamined, and pleased myself with a prospect of the hours which I should revel away in feasts of literature, the obscure recesses of northern learning which I should enter and ransack, the treasures with which I expected every search into those neglected mines to reward my labour, and the triumph with which I should display my acquisitions to mankind. When I had thus enquired into the original of words, I resolved to shew likewise my attention to things; to pierce deep into every science, to enquire the nature of every substance of which I inserted the name, to limit every idea by a definition strictly logical, and exhibit every production of art or nature in an accurate description, that my book might be in place of all other dictionaries whether appellative or technical. But these were the dreams of a poet doomed at last to wake a lexicographer. I soon found that it is too late to look for instruments, when the work calls for execution, and that whatever abilities I had brought to my task, with those I must finally perform it. To deliberate whenever I doubted, to enquire whenever I was ignorant, would have protracted the undertaking without end, and, perhaps, without much improvement; for I did not find by my first experiments, that what I had not of my own was easily to be obtained: I saw that one

enquiry only gave occasion to another, that book referred to book, that to search was not always to find, and to find was not always to be informed; and that thus to pursue perfection, was, like the first inhabitants of Arcadia, to chase the sun, which, when they had reached the hill where he seemed to rest, was still beheld at the same distance from them.

I then contracted my design, determining to confide in myself, and no longer to solicit auxiliaries, which produced more incumbrance than assistance; by this I obtained at least one advantage, that I set limits to my work, which would in time be ended, though not completed.

Despondency has never so far prevailed as to depress me to negligence; some faults will at last appear to be the effects of anxious diligence and persevering activity. The nice and subtle ramifications of meaning were not easily avoided by a mind intent upon accuracy, and convinced of the necessity of disentangling combinations, and separating similitudes. Many of the distinctions which to common readers appear useless and idle, will be found real and important by men versed in the school philosophy, without which no dictionary can ever be accurately compiled, or skilfully examined.

Some senses however there are, which, though not the same, are yet so nearly allied, that they are often confounded. Most men think indistinctly, and therefore cannot speak with exactness; and consequently some examples might be indifferently put to either signification: this uncertainty is not to be imputed to me, who do not form, but register

the language; who do not teach men how they should think, but relate how they have hitherto expressed their thoughts.

The imperfect sense of some examples I lamented, but could not remedy, and hope they will be compensated by innumerable passages selected with propriety, and preserved with exactness; some shining with sparks of imagination, and some replete with treasures of wisdom.

The orthography and etymology, though imperfect, are not imperfect for want of care, but because care will not always be successful, and recollection or information come too late for use.

That many terms of art and manufacture are omitted, must be frankly acknowledged; but for this defect I may boldly allege that it was unavoidable; I could not visit caverns to learn the miner's language, nor take a voyage to perfect my skill in the dialect of navigation, nor visit the warehouses of merchants, and shops of artificers, to gain the names of wares, tools and operations, of which no mention is found in books; what favourable accident or easy enquiry brought within my reach, has not been neglected; but it had been a hopeless labour to glean up words, by courting living information, and contesting with the sullenness of one, and the roughness of another.

To furnish the Academicians *della Crusca* with words of this kind, a series of comedies called *La Fiera* or the Fair, was professedly written by Buonaroti; but I had no such assistant, and therefore was content to want what they must have wanted likewise, had they not luckily been so supplied.

Nor are all words which are not found in the vocabulary, to be lamented as omissions. Of the laborious and mercantile part of the people, the diction is in a great measure casual and mutable; many of their terms are formed for some temporary or local convenience, and though current at certain times and places, are in others utterly unknown. This fugitive cant, which is always in a state of increase or decay, cannot be regarded as any part of the durable materials of a language, and therefore must be suffered to perish with other things unworthy of preservation.

Care will sometimes betray to the appearance of negligence. He that is catching opportunities which seldom occur, will suffer those to pass by unregarded, which he expects hourly to return; he that is searching for rare and remote things, will neglect those that are obvious and familiar: thus many of the most common and cursory words have been inserted with little illustration, because in gathering the authorities, I forebore to copy those which I thought likely to occur whenever they were wanted. It is remarkable that, in reviewing my collection, I found the word *sea* unexemplified.

Thus it happens, that in things difficult there is danger from ignorance, aud in things easy, from confidence; the mind, afraid of greatness, and disdainful of littleness, hastily withdraws herself from painful searches, and passes with scornful rapidity over tasks not adequate to her powers sometimes too secure for caution, and again too anxious for vigorous effort; sometimes idle in a plain path,

and sometimes distracted in labyrinths, and dissipated by different intentions.

A large work is difficult because it is large, even though all its parts might singly be performed with facility; where there are many things to be done, each must be allowed its share of time and labour, in the proportion only which it bears to the whole; nor can it be expected, that the stones which form the dome of a temple, should be squared and polished like the diamond of a ring.

Of the event of this work, for which, having laboured it with so much application, I cannot but have some degree of parental fondness, it is natural to form conjectures. Those who have been persuaded to think well of my design, will require that it should fix our language, and put a stop to those alterations which time and chance have hitherto been suffered to make in it without opposition. With this consequence I will confess that I flattered myself for a while; but now begin to fear that I have indulged expectation which neither reason nor experience can justify. When we see men grow old and die at a certain time one after another, from century to century, we laugh at the elixir that promises to prolong life to a thousand years; and with equal justice may the lexicographer be derided, who being able to produce no example of a nation that has preserved their words and phrases from mutability, shall imagine that his dictionary can embalm his language, and secure it from corruption and decay, that it is in his power to change sublunary nature, and clear the world at once from folly, vanity, and affectation.

With this hope, however, academies have been instituted, to guard the avenues of their languages, to retain fugitives, and repulse intruders; but their vigilance and activity have hitherto been vain; sounds are too volatile and subtile for legal restraints; to enchain syllables, and to lash the wind, are equally the undertakings of pride, unwilling to measure its desires by its strength. The French language has visibly changed under the inspection of the Academy; the style of Amelot's translation of Father Paul is observed by Le Courayer to be *un peu passé;* and no Italian will maintain, that the diction of any modern writer is not perceptibly different from that of Boccace, Machiavel, or Caro.

Total and sudden transformations of a language seldom happen; conquests and migrations are now very rare: but there are other causes of change, which, though slow in their operation, and invisible in their progress, are perhaps as much superior to human resistance, as the revolutions of the sky, or intumescence of the tide. Commerce, however necessary, however lucrative, as it depraves the manners, corrupts the language; they that have frequent intercourse with strangers, to whom they endeavour to accommodate themselves, must in time learn a mingled dialect, like the jargon which serves the traffickers on the Mediterranean and Indian coasts. This will not always be confined to the exchange, the warehouse, or the port, but will be communicated by degrees to other ranks of the people, and be at last incorporated with the current speech.

There are likewise internal causes equally forcible. The language most likely to continue long

without alteration, would be that of a nation raised a little, and but a little, above barbarity, secluded from strangers, and totally employed in procuring the conveniencies of life; either without books, or, like some of the Mahometan countries, with very few: men thus busied and unlearned, having only such words as common use requires, would perhaps long continue to express the same notions by the same signs. But no such constancy can be expected in a people polished by arts, and classed by subordination, where one part of the community is sustained and accommodated by the labour of the other. Those who have much leisure to think, will always be enlarging the stock of ideas; and every increase of knowledge, whether real or fancied, will produce new words, or combination of words. When the mind is unchained from necessity, it will range after convenience; when it is left at large in the fields of speculation, it will shift opinions; as any custom is disused, the words that expressed it must perish with it; as any opinion grows popular, it will innovate speech in the same proportion as it alters practice.

As by the cultivation of various sciences, a language is amplified, it will be more furnished with words deflected from their original sense; the geometrician will talk of a courtier's zenith, or the eccentrick virtue of a wild hero, and the physician of sanguine expectations and phlegmatic delays. Copiousness of speech will give opportunities to capricious choice, by which some words will be preferred, and others degraded; vicissitudes of fashion will enforce the use of new, or extend the signifi-

cation of known terms. The tropes of poetry will make hourly encroachments, and the metaphorical will become the current sense: pronunciation will be varied by levity or ignorance, and the pen must at length comply with the tongue; illiterate writers will, at one time or other, by publick infatuation, rise into renown, who not knowing the original import of words, will use them with colloquial licentiousness, confound distinction, and forget propriety. As politeness increases, some expressions will be considered as too gross and vulgar for the delicate, others as too formal and ceremonious for the gay and airy; new phrases are therefore adopted, which must, for the same reasons, be in time dismissed. Swift, in his petty treatise on the English language, allows that new words must sometimes be introduced, but proposes that none should be suffered to become obsolete. But what makes a word obsolete, more than general agreement to forbear it? and how shall it be continued, when it conveys an offensive idea, or recalled again into the mouths of mankind, when it has once become unfamiliar by disuse, and unpleasing by unfamiliarity?

There is another cause of alteration more prevalent than any other, which yet in the present state of the world cannot be obviated. A mixture of two languages will produce a third distinct from both, and they will always be mixed, where the chief parts of education, and the most conspicuous accomplishment, is skill in ancient or in foreign tongues. He that has long cultivated another language, will find its words and combinations crowd upon his memory; and haste and negligence,

refinement and affectation, will obtrude borrowed terms and exotick expressions.

The great pest of speech is frequency of translation. No book was ever turned from one language into another, without imparting something of its native idiom; this is the most mischievous and comprehensive innovation; single words may enter by thousands, and the fabrick of the tongue continue the same; but new phraseology changes much at once; it alters not the single stones of the building, but the order of the columns. If an academy should be established for the cultivation of our style; which I, who can never wish to see dependence multiplied, hope the spirit of English liberty will hinder or destroy, let them, instead of compiling grammars and dictionaries, endeavour, with all their influence, to stop the licence of translators, whose idleness and ignorance, if it be suffered to proceed, will reduce us to babble a dialect of France.

If the changes that we fear be thus irresistible, what remains but to acquiesce with silence, as in the other insurmountable distresses of humanity? It remains that we retard what we cannot repel, that we palliate what we cannot cure. Life may be lengthened by care, though death cannot be ultimately defeated: tongues, like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration; we have long preserved our constitution, let us make some struggles for our language.

In hope of giving longevity to that which its own nature forbids to be immortal, I have devoted this book, the labour of years, to the honour of my

country, that we may no longer yield the palm of philology, without a contest, to the nations of the continent. The chief glory of every people arises from its authors: whether I shall add any thing by my own writings to the reputation of English literature, must be left to time: much of my life has been lost under the pressures of disease; much has been trifled away; and much has always been spent in provision for the day that was passing over me; but I shall not think my employment useless or ignoble, if by my assistance foreign nations, and distant ages, gain access to the propagators of knowledge, and understand the teachers of truth; if my labours afford light to the repositories of science, and add celebrity to Bacon, to Hooker, to Milton, and to Boyle.

When I am animated by this wish, I look with pleasure on my book, however defective, and deliver it to the world with the spirit of a man that has endeavoured well. That it will immediately become popular I have not promised to myself: a few wild blunders, and risible absurdities, from which no work of such multiplicity was ever free, may for a time furnish folly with laughter, and harden ignorance into contempt; but useful diligence will at last prevail, and there never can be wanting some who distinguish desert; who will consider that no dictionary of a living tongue ever can be perfect, since, while it is hastening to publication, some words are budding, and some falling away; that a whole life cannot be spent upon syntax and etymology, and that even a whole life would not be sufficient; that he, whose design in-

cludes whatever language can express, must often speak of what he does not understand; that a writer will sometimes be hurried by eagerness to the end, and sometimes faint with weariness under a task, which Scaliger compares to the labours of the anvil and the mine; that what is obvious is not always known, and what is known is not always present; that sudden fits of inadvertency will surprise vigilance, slight avocations will seduce attention, and casual eclipses of the mind will darken learning; and that the writer shall often in vain trace his memory at the moment of need, for that which yesterday he knew with intuitive readiness, and which will come uncalled into his thoughts tomorrow.

In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceed the faults of that which it condemns; yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it, that the "English Dictionary" was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academick bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed. If the lexicons of ancient tongues, now immutably fixed, and comprized in a few volumes, be yet, after the

toil of successive ages, inadequate and delusive; if the aggregated knowledge, and co-operating diligence of the Italian academicians, did not secure them from the censure of Beni; if the embodied criticks of France, when fifty years had been spent upon their work, were obliged to change its œconomy, and give their second edition another form, I may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which, if I could obtain, in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds: I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise. *

* Dr. Johnson's Dictionary was published on the fifteenth day of April 1755, in two vols. folio, price 4*l.* 10*s.* bound. The booksellers who engaged in this National Work were the Knaptons, Longman, Hitch and Co. Millar, and Dodsley. C.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

FOURTH EDITION

OF THE

ENGLISH DICTIONARY.*

MANY are the works of human industry, which to begin and finish are hardly granted to the same man. He that undertakes to compile a Dictionary, undertakes that, which, if it comprehends the full extent of his design, he knows himself unable to perform. Yet his labours, though deficient, may be useful, and with the hope of this inferior praise, he must incite his activity, and solace his weariness.

Perfection is unattainable, but nearer and nearer approaches may be made; and finding my Dictionary about to be reprinted, I have endeavoured, by a revi sal, to make it less reprehensible. I will not deny that I found many parts requiring emendation, and many more capable of improvement. Many faults I have corrected, some superfluities I have taken away, and some deficiencies I have supplied. I have methodised some parts that were disordered, and illuminated some that were obscure. Yet the changes

* Published in folio, 1773.

or additions bear a very small proportion to the whole. The critic will now have less to object, but the student who has bought any of the former copies needs not repent; he will not, without nice collation, perceive how they differ; and usefulness seldom depends upon little things.

For negligence or deficience, I have perhaps not need of more apology than the nature of the work will furnish: I have left that inaccurate which never was made exact, and that imperfect which never was completed.

PREFACE

TO THE

OCTAVO EDITION

OF THE

ENGLISH DICTIONARY.*

HAVING been long employed in the study and cultivation of the English language, I lately published a Dictionary like those compiled by the academies of Italy and France, for the use of such as aspire to exactness of criticism, or elegance of style.

But it has been since considered that works of that kind are by no means necessary to the greater number of readers, who, seldom intending to write or presuming to judge, turn over books only to amuse their leisure, and to gain degrees of knowledge suitable to lower characters, or necessary to the common business of life: these know not any other use of a dictionary than that of adjusting orthography, and explaining terms of science, or words of infrequent occurrence, or remote derivation.

For these purposes many dictionaries have been written by different authors, and with different degrees of skill; but none of them have yet fallen into

* Published in 2 vols. 1756.

my hands by which even the lowest expectations could be satisfied. Some of their authors wanted industry, and others literature: some knew not their own defects, and others were too idle to supply them.

For this reason a small dictionary appeared yet to be wanting to common readers; and, as I may without arrogance claim to myself a longer acquaintance with the lexicography of our language than any other writer has had, I shall hope to be considered as having more experience at least than most of my predecessors, and as more likely to accommodate the nation with a vocabulary of daily use. I therefore offer to the Public an Abstract or Epitome of my former Work.

In comparing this with other dictionaries of the same kind, it will be found to have several advantages.

I. It contains many words not to be found in any other.

II. Many barbarous terms and phrases by which other dictionaries may vitiate the style, are rejected from this.

III. The words are more correctly spelled, partly by attention to their etymology, and partly by observation of the practice of the best authors.

IV. The etymologies and derivations, whether from foreign languages or from native roots, are more diligently traced, and more distinctly noted.

V. The senses of each word are more copiously enumerated, and more clearly explained.

VI. Many words occurring in the elder authors, such as Spenser, Shakspeare, and Milton, which had been hitherto omitted, are here carefully inserted;

so that this book may serve as a glossary or expository index to the poetical writers.

VII. To the words, and to the different senses of each word, are subjoined from the large dictionary the names of those writers by whom they have been used; so that the reader who knows the different periods of the language, and the time of its authors, may judge of the elegance or prevalence of any word, or meaning of a word; and without recurring to other books, may know what are antiquated, what are unusual, and what are recommended by the best authority.

The words of this Dictionary, as opposed to others, are more diligently collected, more accurately spelled, more faithfully explained, and more authentically ascertained. Of an Abstract it is not necessary to say more; and I hope it will not be found that truth requires me to say less.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

TRAGEDY OF MACBETH:

WITH REMARKS

ON SIR T. HANMER'S EDITION OF SHAKESPEARE.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1745.

"As to all those things which have been published under the titles of *Essays, Remarks, Observations*, &c. on Shakespeare (if you except some critical notes on Macbeth, given as a specimen of a projected edition, and written as appears by a man of parts and genius) the rest are absolutely below a serious notice." *Warburton's Preface to Shakespeare.* E.

NOTE I.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter three Witches.

In order to make a true estimate of the abilities and merit of a writer, it is always necessary to examine the genius of his age, and the opinions of his contemporaries. A poet who should now make the whole action of his tragedy depend upon enchantment, and produce the chief events by the assistance of supernatural agents, would be censured as transgressing the bounds of probability, he would be

banished from the theatre to the nursery, and condemned to write Fairy Tales instead of Tragedies; but a survey of the notions that prevailed at the time when this play was written will prove that Shakespeare was in no danger of such censures, since he only turned the system that was then universally admitted to his advantage, and was far from overburthening the credulity of his audience.

The reality of witchcraft or enchantment, which, though not strictly the same, are confounded in this play, has in all ages and countries been credited by the common people, and in most by the learned themselves. These phantoms have indeed appeared more frequently, in proportion as the darkness of ignorance has been more gross; but it cannot be shown, that the brighest gleams of knowledge have at any time been sufficient to drive them out of the world. The time in which this kind of credulity was at its height, seems to have been that of the holy war, in which the Christians imputed all their defeats to enchantment or diabolical opposition, as they ascribe their success to the assistance of their military saints; and the learned Mr. Warburton appears to believe ("Suppl. to the Introduction to Don Quixote") that the first accounts of enchantments were brought into this part of the world by those who returned from their eastern expeditions. But there is always some distance between the birth and maturity of folly as of wickedness: this opinion had long existed, though perhaps the application of it had in no foregoing age been so frequent, nor the reception so general. Olympiodorus, in Photius's Extracts, tells

us of one Libanius, who practised this kind of military magick, and having promised χώρις ὁπλιτῶν κατὰ Βαρβάρων ἐνεργεῖν, *to perform great things against the Barbarians without soldiers*, was, at the instances of the empress Placidia, put to death, when he was about to have given proofs of his abilities. The empress showed some kindness in her anger by cutting him off at a time so convenient for his reputation.

But a more remarkable proof of the antiquity of this notion may be found in St. Chrysostom's book *de Sacerdotio*, which exhibits a scene of enchantments not exceeded by any romance of the middle age; he supposes a spectator, overlooking a field of battle, attended by one that points out all the various objects of horrour, the engines of destruction, and the arts of slaughter. Δεικνύτο δὲ ἔτι παρὰ τοῖς ἐναντίοις καὶ πετομένους ἵππους διά τινος μαγγανείας, καὶ ὁπλίτας δι' ἀέρος φερομένους, καὶ πάσην γοητείας δύναμιν καὶ ἰδέαν. *Let him then proceed to show him in the opposite armies horses flying by enchantment, armed men transported through the air, and every power and form of magick.* Whether St. Chrysostom believed that such performances were really to be seen in a day of battle, or only endeavoured to enliven his description, by adopting the notions of the vulgar, it is equally certain, that such notions were in his time received, and that therefore they were not imported from the Saracens in a later age; the wars with the Saracens, however, gave occasion to their propagation, not only as bigotry naturally discovers prodigies, but as the scene of action was removed to a greater

distance, and distance either of time or place is sufficient to reconcile weak minds to wonderful relations.

The reformation did not immediately arrive at its meridian, and though day was gradually encreasing upon us, the goblins of witchcraft still continued to hover in the twilight. In the time of Queen Elizabeth was the remarkable trial of the witches of Warbois, whose conviction is still commemorated in an annual sermon at Huntingdon. But in the reign of King James, in which this tragedy was written, many circumstances concurred to propagate and confirm this opinion. The king, who was much celebrated for his knowledge, had, before his arrival in England, not only examined in person a woman accused of witchcraft, but had given a very formal account of the practices and illusions of evil spirits, the compacts of witches, the ceremonies used by them, the manner of detecting them, and the justice of punishing them, in his dialogues of Dæmonologie, written in the Scottish dialect, and published at Edinburgh. This book was, soon after his accession, reprinted at London; and as the ready way to gain King James's favour was to flatter his speculations, the system of Dæmonologie was immediately adopted by all who desired either to gain preferment or not to lose it. Thus the doctrine of witchcraft was very powerfully inculcated; and as the greatest part of mankind have no other reason for their opinions than that they are in fashion, it cannot be doubted but this persuasion made a rapid progress, since vanity and credulity cooperated in its favour, and it had a tendency to free cowardice from reproach. The infection soon reached the parliament, who, in the first year of King James,

made a law, by which it was enacted, ch. xii. That, "if any person shall use any invocation or conjuration of any evil or wicked spirit; 2. Or shall consult, covenant with, entertain, employ, feed, or reward any evil or cursed spirit to or for any intent or purpose; 3. Or take up any dead man, woman, or child out of the grave,—or the skin, bone, or any part of the dead person, to be employed or used in any manner of witchcraft, sorcery, charm, or enchantment; 4. Or shall use, practise, or exercise any sort of witchcraft, sorcery, charm, or enchantment; 5. Whereby any person shall be destroyed, killed, wasted, consumed, pined, or lamed in any part of the body; 6. That every such person, being convicted, shall suffer death."

Thus, in the time of Shakespeare, was the doctrine of witchcraft at once established by law and by the fashion, and it became not only unpolite, but criminal, to doubt it; and as prodigies are always seen in proportion as they are expected, witches were every day discovered, and multiplied so fast in some places, that bishop Hall mentions a village in Lancashire, where their number was greater than that of the houses. The Jesuits and Sectaries took advantage of this universal error, and endeavoured to promote the interest of their parties by pretended cures of persons afflicted by evil spirits, but they were detected and exposed by the clergy of the established church.

Upon this general infatuation Shakespeare might be easily allowed to found a play, especially since he has followed with great exactness such histories as were then thought true; nor can it be doubted that the scenes of enchantment, however they may now be

ridiculed, were both by himself and his audience thought awful and affecting.

NOTE II.

SCENE II.

——The merciless Macdonel,—from the Western Isles
Of *Kerns* and *Gallow-glasses* was supply'd;
And fortune on his damned *quarry* smiling,
Show'd like a rebel's whore.

Kerns are light-armed, and *Gallow-glasses* heavy-armed soldiers. The word *quarry* has no sense that is properly applicable in this place, and therefore it is necessary to read,

And fortune on his damned *quarrel* smiling.

Quarrel was formerly used for *cause*, or for *the occasion of a quarrel*, and is to be found in that sense in Hollingshead's account of the story of Macbeth, who, upon the creation of the prince of Cumberland, thought, says the historian, that he had *a just quarrel* to endeavour after the crown. The sense therefore is *fortune smiling on his execrable cause, &c.*

NOTE III.

If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks,
So they redoubled strokes upon the foe.

Mr. Theobald has endeavoured to improve the sense of this passage by altering the punctuation thus:—

——They were
As cannons overcharged, with double cracks
So they redoubled strokes——

He declares, with some degree of exultation, that he has no idea of *a cannon charged with double cracks;* but surely the great author will not gain much by an alteration which makes him say of a hero, that he *redoubles strokes with double cracks,* an expression not more loudly to be applauded, or more easily pardoned, than that which is rejected in its favour. *That a cannon is charged with thunder* or *with double thunders* may be written not only without nonsense, but with elegance; and nothing else is here meant by *cracks,* which in the time of this writer was a word of such emphasis and dignity, that in this play he terms the general dissolution of nature the *crack of doom.*

There are among Mr. Theobald's alterations others which I do not approve, though I do not always censure them; for some of his amendments are so excellent, that, even when he has failed, he ought to be treated with indulgence and respect.

NOTE IV.

King. But who comes here?
Mal. The worthy Thane of Rosse.
Lenox. What haste looks through his eyes?
So should he look, that *seems* to speak things strange.

The meaning of this passage as it now stands is, *so should he look, that looks as if he told things strange.* But Rosse neither yet told strange things,

nor could look as if he told them; Lenox only conjectured from his air that he had strange things to tell, and therefore undoubtedly said

——What haste looks through his eyes?
So should he look, that *teems* to speak things strange.

He looks like one that is big with something of importance, a metaphor so natural, that it is every day used in common discourse.

NOTE V.

SCENE III.

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

1*st Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister?
2*d Witch.* Killing swine.
3*d Witch.* Sister, where thou?
1*st Witch.* A sailor's wife had chesnuts in her lap,
And mouncht, and mouncht, and mouncht. Give me, quoth I.
(1) Aroint thee, witch, the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' th' Tiger:
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And like a rat without a tail,
I'll do—I'll do—and I'll do.
2*d Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.
1*st Witch.* Thou art kind.
3*d Witch.* And I another.
1*st Witch.* I myself have all the other,
And the (2) very points they blow,
All the quarters that they know,
I' th' Ship-man's card——
I will drain him dry as hay;
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man (3) forbid;

Weary sev'n-nights nine times nine,
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:
Tho' his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.
2d Witch. Shew me, Shew me.

(1) Aroint thee, witch,——

In one of the folio editions the reading is *anoint thee*, in a sense very consistent with the common accounts of witches, who are related to perform many supernatural acts by the means of unguents, and particularly to fly through the air to the place where they meet at their hellish festivals. In this sense *anoint thee, witch,* will mean, *away, witch, to your infernal assembly.* This reading I was inclined to favour, because I had met with the word *aroint* in no other place; till looking into Hearne's Collections, I found it in a very old drawing, that he has published, in which St. Patrick is represented visiting hell, and putting the devils into great confusion by his presence, of whom one that is driving the damned before him with a prong, has a label issuing out from his mouth with these words **out out aroynt,** of which the last is evidently the same with *aroint,* and used in the same sense as in this passage.

(2) And the *very* points they blow.

As the word *very* is here of no other use than to fill up the verse, it is likely that Shakespeare wrote *various,* which might be easily mistaken for *very,* being either negligently read, hastily pronounced, or imperfectly heard.

(3) He shall live a man *forbid.*

Mr. Theobald has very justly explained *forbid* by *accursed,* but without giving any reason of his interpretation. To *bid* is originally *to pray,* as in this Saxon fragment:

þe ıſ ꝼıſ ꝥ bıt 7 bote &c.

He is wise that *prays* & improves.

As to *forbid* therefore implies to *prohibit,* in opposition to the word *bid* in its present sense, it signifies by the same kind of opposition to *curse,* when it is derived from the same word in its primitive meaning.

NOTE VI.

SCENE V.

THE incongruity of all the passages in which the *Thane of Cawdor* is mentioned is very remarkable; in the second scene the Thanes of Rosse and Angus bring the king an account of the battle, and inform him that Norway,

Assisted by that most disloyal traytor
The *Thane of Cawdor,* 'gan a dismal conflict.

It appears that Cawdor was taken prisoner, for the king says in the same scene,

——Go, pronounce his death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

Yet though Cawdor was thus taken by Macbeth, in arms against his king, when Macbeth is saluted, in the fourth scene, Thane of Cawdor, by the Weird Sisters, he asks,

How of *Cawdor?* the *Thane of Cawdor lives,*
A prosp'rous gentleman.——

And in the next line considers the promises, that he should be Cawdor and King, as equally unlikely to be accomplished. How can Macbeth be ignorant of the state of the Thane of Cawdor, whom he has just defeated and taken prisoner, or call him a *prosperous gentleman* who has forfeited his title and life by open rebellion? Or why should he wonder that the title of the rebel whom he has overthrown should be conferred upon him? He cannot be supposed to dissemble his knowledge of the condition of Cawdor, because he inquires with all the ardour of curiosity, and the vehemence of sudden astonishment; and because nobody is present but Banquo, who had an equal part in the battle, and was equally acquainted with Cawdor's treason. However, in the next scene, his ignorance still continues; and when Rosse and Angus present him from the king with his new title, he cries out

——The *Thane of Cawdor* lives.
Why do you dress me in his borrowed robes?

Rosse and Angus, who were the messengers that in the second scene informed the king of the assistance given by Cawdor to the invader, having lost, as well as Macbeth, all memory of what they had so lately seen and related, make this answer,

——Whether he was
Combin'd with Norway, or did line the rebels
With hidden help and vantage, or with both
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not.

Neither Rosse knew what he had just reported, nor

Macbeth what he had just done. This seems not to be one of the faults that are to be imputed to the transcribers, since, though the inconsistency of Rosse and Angus might be removed, by supposing that their names are erroneously inserted, and that only Rosse brought the account of the battle, and only Angus was sent to compliment Macbeth, yet the forgetfulness of Macbeth cannot be palliated, since what he says could not have been spoken by any other.

NOTE VII.

THE thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man,——

The *single state of man* seems to be used by Shakespeare for an *individual*, in opposition to a *commonwealth*, or *conjunct body* of men.

NOTE VIII.

Macbeth.——COME what come may,
Time and the hour runs thro' the roughest day.

I suppose every reader is disgusted at the tautology in this passage, *time and the hour*, and will therefore willingly believe that Shakespeare wrote it thus,

——Come what come may,
Time! on!—the hour runs thro' the roughest day.

Macbeth is deliberating upon the events which are to befal him; but finding no satisfaction from his own thoughts, he grows impatient of reflection, and resolves to wait the close without harassing himself with conjectures,

——Come what come may.

But to shorten the pain of suspense, he calls upon time in the usual style of ardent desire, to quicken his motion,

Time! on!——

He then comforts himself with the reflection that all his perplexity must have an end,

——The hour runs thro' the roughest day.

This conjecture is supported by the passage in the letter to his lady, in which he says, *They referr'd me to the* coming on of time *with Hail King that shall be.*

NOTE IX.

SCENE VI.

Malcolm.——NOTHING in his life
Became him like the leaving it. He died,
As one that had been studied in his death,
To throw away the dearest thing he *ow'd*,
As 'twere a careless trifle.

As the word *ow'd* affords here no sense but such as is forced and unnatural, it cannot be doubted that it was originally written, *The dearest thing he own'd*; a reading which needs neither defence nor explication.

NOTE X.

King.——THERE 's no art,
To find the mind's construction in the face.

The *construction of the mind* is, I believe, a

phrase peculiar to Shakespeare; it implies the *frame or disposition* of the mind, by which it is determined to good or ill.

NOTE XI.

Macbeth. THE service, and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties, and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants,
Which do but what they should, in doing *every thing*
Safe tow'rds your love and honour.

Of the last line of this speech, which is certainly, as it is now read, unintelligible, an emendation has been attempted, which Mr. Warburton and Mr. Theobald have admitted as the true reading.

——Our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants,
Which do but what they should, in doing every thing
Fiefs to your love and honour.

My esteem of these criticks, inclines me to believe, that they cannot be much pleased with the expressions *Fiefs to love*, or *Fiefs to honour*; and that they have proposed this alteration rather because no other occurred to them, than because they approved it. I shall therefore propose a bolder change, perhaps with no better success, but *sua cuique placent.* I read thus,

Our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants,
Which do but what they should, in doing *nothing*
Save tow'rds *your love and honour.*

it perform our duty when we contract all

our views to your service, when we act with *no other* principle than regard to *your love and honour.*

It is probable that this passage was first corrupted by writing *safe* for *save,* and the lines then stood thus,

——Doing nothing
Safe tow'rd your love and honour.

Which the next transcriber observing to be wrong, and yet not being able to discover the real fault, altered to the present reading.

NOTE XII.

SCENE VII.

——Thou'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, "thus thou must do if thou have *it,*
"And that," *&c.*

As the object of Macbeth's desire is here introduced speaking of itself, it is necessary to read,

——Thou'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, "thus thou must do if thou have *me.*"

NOTE XIII.

——Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
That fate and metaphysical aid do *seem*
To have thee crown'd withal.

For *seem* the sense evidently directs us to read *seek.* The crown to which fate destines thee, and

which preternatural agents *endeavour* to bestow upon thee. The *golden round* is the *diadem*.

NOTE XIV.

Lady Macbeth.——Come all you spirits
That tend on *mortal thoughts*, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to th' toe, top-full
Of direst cruelty; make thick my blood,
Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my full purpose, nor *keep peace* between
Th' effect and it.

Mortal thoughts.

This expression signifies not *the thoughts of mortals*, but *murtherous*, *deadly*, or *destructive designs*. So in Act 5th.

Hold fast the *mortal* sword.

And in another place,

With twenty *mortal* murthers.

——Nor keep pace between
Th' effect and it.

The intent of Lady Macbeth, evidently is to wish that no womanish tenderness, or conscientious remorse may hinder her purpose from proceeding to effect; but neither this, nor indeed any other sense is expressed by the present reading, and therefore it cannot be doubted that Shakespeare wrote differently, perhaps thus:

That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor *keep pace* between
Th' effect and it.

To *keep pace between*, may signify *to pass between*, to *intervene*. *Pace* is on many occasions a favourite of Shakespeare. This phrase is indeed not usual in this sense, but was it not its novelty that gave occasion to the present corruption?

NOTE XV.

SCENE VIII.

King. This castle hath a pleasant *seat;* the air,
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.
Banquo. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting Martlet, does approve,
By his lov'd mansionary, that heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here. No jutting frieze,
Buttrice, nor coigne of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed, and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd
The air is delicate.

In this short scene, I propose a slight alteration to be made, by substituting *site* for *seat*, as the ancient word for *situation;* and *sense* for *senses*, as more agreeable to the measure; for which reason likewise I have endeavoured to adjust this passage,

——Heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here. No jutting frieze,

By changing the punctuation and adding a syllable thus,

——Heaven's breath
Smells wooingly. Here is no jutting frieze.

Those who have perused books printed at the time of the first editions of Shakespeare, know that

greater alterations than these are necessary almost in every page, even where it is not to be doubted that the copy was correct.

NOTE XVI.

SCENE X.

THE arguments by which Lady Macbeth persuades her husband to commit the murder, afford a proof of Shakespeare's knowledge of human nature. She urges the excellence and dignity of courage, a glittering idea which has dazzled mankind from age to age, and animated sometimes the housebreaker; and sometimes the conqueror: but this sophism Macbeth has for ever destroyed by distinguishing true from false fortitude, in a line and a half; of which it may almost be said, that they ought to bestow immortality on the author, though all his other productions had been lost.

> I dare do all that may become a man,
> Who dares do more is none.

This topick, which has been always employed with too much success, is used in this scene with peculiar propriety, to a soldier by a woman. Courage is the distinguishing virtue of a soldier, and the reproach of cowardice cannot be borne by any man from a woman, without great impatience,

She then urges the oaths by which he had bound himself to murder Duncan, another art of sophistry by which men have sometimes deluded their consciences, and persuaded themselves that what would be criminal in others is virtuous in them; this argu-

ment Shakespeare, whose plan obliged him to make Macbeth yield, has not confuted, though he might easily have shown that a former obligation could not be vacated by a latter.

NOTE XVII.

LETTING *I dare not*, wait upon *I would*,
Like the poor cat i' th' adage.

The adage alluded to is, *The cat loves fish, but dares not wet her foot,*

Catus amat pisces, sed non vult tingere plantas.

NOTE XVIII.

WILL I with wine and wassel so convince.

To convince is in Shakespeare to *over-power* or *subdue*, as in this play,

——Their malady *convinces*
The great assay of art.

NOTE XIX.

——WHO shall bear the guilt
Of our great *quell.*

Quell is *murder*, *manquellers* being in the old lan guage the term for which *murderers* is now used.

NOTE XX.

ACT II. SCENE II.

——Now o'er one half the world
(1) *Nature seems dead*, and wicked dreams abuse

The curtain'd sleep; now witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecat's offerings: and wither'd murder,
(Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch) thus with his stealthy pace,
With (2) Tarquin's ravishing sides tow'rds his design
Moves like a ghost—Thou sound and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my where-about,
And (3) take the present horror from the time,
That now suits with it ——

(1)——Now o'er one half the world
Nature seems dead.

That is, *over our hemisphere all action and motion seem to have ceased.* This image, which is perhaps, the most striking that poetry can produce, has been adopted by Dryden in his "Conquest of Mexico."

All things are hush'd as nature's self lay dead,
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head:
The little birds in dreams their songs repeat,
And sleeping flow'rs beneath the night-dews sweat.
Even lust and envy sleep!

These lines, though so well known, I have transcribed, that the contrast between them and this passage of Shakespeare may be more accurately observed.

Night is described by two great poets, but one describes a night of quiet, the other of perturbation. In the night of Dryden, all the disturbers of the world are laid asleep; in that of Shakespeare, nothing but sorcery, lust, and murder is awake. He that reads Dryden, finds himself lulled with serenity, and disposed to solitude and contemplation. He that peruses Shakespeare, looks round alarmed, and starts

self alone. One is the night of a lover, that of a murderer.

(2)———Wither'd murder,
——— Thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's *ravishing sides tow'rd his design,*
Moves like a ghost.——

This was the reading of this passage in all the editions before that of Mr. Pope, who for *sides*, inserted in the text *strides*, which Mr. Theobald has tacitly copied from him, though a more proper alteration might perhaps have been made. A *ravishing stride* is an action of violence, impetuosity, and tumult, like that of a savage rushing on his prey; whereas the poet is here attempting to exhibit an image of secrecy and caution, of anxious circumspection and guilty timidity, the *stealthy pace* of a *ravisher* creeping into the chamber of a virgin, and of an assassin approaching the bed of him whom he proposes to murder, without awaking him; these he describes as *moving like ghosts*, whose progression is so different from *strides*, that it has been in all ages represented to be, as Milton expresses it,

Smooth sliding without step.

This hemistick will afford the true reading of this place, which is, I think, to be corrected thus:

——And wither'd murder,
——Thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin ravishing, slides tow'rd his design,
Moves like a ghost.

Tarquin is in this place the general name of a ravisher, and the sense is, Now is the time in which every one is asleep, but those who are employed in

wickedness, the witch who is sacrificing to Hecate, and the ravisher and the murderer, who, like me, are stealing upon their prey.

When the reading is thus adjusted, he wishes with great propriety, in the following lines, that the earth may not *hear his steps.*

(3) And take the present horror from the time
That now suits with it.

I believe every one that has attentively read this dreadful soliloquy is disappointed at the conclusion, which, if not wholly unintelligible, is at least obscure, nor can be explained into any sense worthy of the author. I shall therefore propose a slight alteration.

——Thou sound and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my where-about,
And *talk*—the present horror of the time!——
That now suits with it——

Macbeth has, in the foregoing lines, disturbed his imagination by enumerating all the terrours of the night; at length he is wrought up to a degree of frenzy, that makes him afraid of some supernatural discovery of his design, and calls out to the stones not to betray him, not to declare where he walks, nor *to talk.*—As he is going to say of what, he discovers the absurdity of his suspicion, and pauses, but is again o'erwhelmed by his guilt, and concludes that such are the horrours of the present night, that the stones may be expected to cry out against him.

That now suits with it.

He observes in a subsequent passage, that on such ions *stones have been known to move.* It is

now a very just and strong picture of a man about to commit a deliberate murder, under the strongest convictions of the wickedness of his design.

NOTE XXI.

SCENE IV.

Lenox. The night has been unruly; where we lay
Our chimnies were blown down. And, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' th' air, strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustions, and confused events,
New-hatch'd to the woful time.
The obscure bird clamour'd the live-long night,
Some say the earth was fev'rous and did shake.

These lines I think should be rather regulated thus:

——Prophesying with accents terrible,
Of dire combustions and confused events.
New-hatch'd to the woful time, the obscure bird
Clamour'd the live-long night. Some say the earth
Was fev'rous and did shake.

A *prophecy* of an *event new-hatch'd,* seems to be *a prophecy* of an *event past.* The term *new-hatch'd* is properly applicable to a *bird,* and that birds of ill omen should be *new-hatch'd to the woful time* is very consistent with the rest of the prodigies here mentioned, and with the universal disorder into which nature is described as thrown by the perpetration of this horrid murder.

NOTE XXII.

——Up! Up! and see
The great doom's image Malcolm, Banquo,
As from your graves rise up.——

The second line might have been so easily completed, that it cannot be supposed to have been left imperfect by the author, who probably wrote,

——Malcolm! Banquo! rise!
As from your graves rise up.——

Many other emendations of the same kind might be made, without any greater deviation from the printed copies, than is found in each of them from the rest.

NOTE XXIII.

Macbeth.——Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood,
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature,
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there the murtherers
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore.——

An *unmannerly dagger*, and a *dagger breech'd*, or as in some editions *breach'd with gore*, are expressions not easily to be understood, nor can it be imagined that Shakespeare would reproach the murderer of his king only with *want of manners*. There are undoubtedly two faults in this passage, which I have endeavoured to take away by reading

——*Daggers*
Unmanly drench'd with gore.——

I saw drench'd *with the king's blood the fatal daggers, not only instruments of murder but evidences of cowardice.*

Each of these words might easily be confounded with that which I have substituted for it by a hand not exact, a casual blot, or a negligent inspection.

Mr. Pope has endeavoured to improve one of these lines by substituting *goary blood* for *golden blood*, but it may easily be admitted, that he who could on such an occasion talk of *lacing the silver skin* would *lace it* with *golden blood*. No amendment can be made to this line, of which every word is equally faulty, but by a general blot.

It is not improbable, that Shakespeare put these forced and unnatural metaphors into the mouth of Macbeth, as a mark of artifice and dissimulation, to show the difference between the studied language of hypocrisy, and the natural outcries of sudden passion. This whole speech, considered in this light, is a remarkable instance of judgment, as it consists entirely of antitheses and metaphors.

NOTE XXIV.

ACT III. SCENE II.

Macbeth.——Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd. 'Tis much he dares,
And to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he,
Whose being I do fear: and under him,
My genius is rebuk'd; (1) *as it is said,*
Anthony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters,

When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then prophet-like,
They hail'd him father to a line of kings,
Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If 'tis so,
For Banquo's issue have I fil'd my mind,
For them the gracious Duncan have I murther'd,
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them, and mine eternal jewel
Given to the (2) common enemy of man,
To make them kings,—the seed of Banquo kings.
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
(3) And champion me to th' utterance———

(1) ——As it is said,
Anthony's was by Cæsar.

Though I would not often assume the critick's privilege of being confident where certainty cannot be obtained, nor indulge myself too far in departing from the established reading; yet I cannot but propose the rejection of this passage, which I believe was an insertion of some player, that, having so much learning as to discover to what Shakespeare alluded, was not willing that his audience should be less learning than himself, and has therefore weakened the author's sense by the intrusion of a remote and useless image into a speech bursting from a man wholly possessed with his own present condition, and therefore not at leisure to explain his own allusions to himself. If these words are taken away, by which not only the thought but the numbers are injured, the lines of Shakespeare close together without any traces of a breach.

My genius is rebuk'd. He chid the sisters.

(2) ——The common enemy of man.

It is always an entertainment to an inquisitive reader, to trace a sentiment to its original source, and therefore, though the term *enemy of man* applied to the devil is in itself natural and obvious, yet some may be pleased with being informed, that Shakespeare probably borrowed it from the first lines of the "Destruction of Troy," a book which he is known to have read.

That this remark may not appear too trivial, I shall take occasion from it to point out a beautiful passage of Milton, evidently copied from a book of no greater authority: in describing the gates of hell, book ii. v. 879. he says,

———On a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.

In the history of "Don Bellianis," when one of the knights approaches, as I remember, the castle of Brandezar, the gates are said to open *grating harsh thunder upon their brazen hinges.*

(3) Come fate into the list,
And champion me to th' utterance.——

This passage will be best explained by translating it into the language from whence the only word of difficulty in it is borrowed. *Que la destinée se rende en lice, et qu'elle me donne un defi* a l'outrance. A challenge or a combat *a l'outrance, to extremity,* was a fixed term in the law of arms, used when the combatants engaged with an *odium internecinum, an intention to destroy each other,* in opposition to

trials of skill at festivals, or on other occasions, where the contest was only for reputation or a prize. The sense therefore is, *Let fate that has fore-doom'd the exaltation of the sons of Banquo, enter the lists against me, with the utmost animosity, in defence of its own decrees, which I will endeavour to invalidate, whatever be the danger.*

NOTE XXV.

Macbeth. Ay, in the catalogue, ye go for men,
As hounds and grey-hounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-ruggs, and demy-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs.

Though this is not the most sparkling passage in the play, and though the name of a dog is of no great importance, yet it may not be improper to remark, that there is no such species of dogs as *shoughs* mentioned by Caius *de Canibus Britannicis*, or any other writer that has fallen into my hands, nor is the word to be found in any dictionary which I have examined. I therefore imagined that it is falsely printed for *slouths*, a kind of slow hound bred in the southern parts of England, but was informed by a lady, that it is more probably used, either by mistake, or according to the orthography of that time, for *shocks*.

NOTE XXVI.

Macbeth.---In this hour at most,
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,

Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' th' time,
The moment on't, for 't must be done to-night,
And something from the palace:———

What is meant by *the spy of the time*, it will be found difficult to explain; and therefore sense will be cheaply gained by a slight alteration.—Macbeth is assuring the assassins that they shall not want directions to find Banquo, and therefore says,

I will———
Acquaint you with a perfect spy *o' th' time.*

Accordingly a third murderer joins them afterwards at the place of action.

Perfect is *well instructed*, or *well informed*, as in this play,

Though in your state of honour I am *perfect.*

Though I am well acquainted *with your quality and rank.*

NOTE XXVII.

SCENE IV.

2d Murderer. He needs not to mistrust, since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do,
To the direction just.

Mr. Theobald has endeavoured unsuccessfully to amend this passage, in which nothing is faulty but the punctuation. The meaning of this abrupt dialogue is this: The *perfect spy*, mentioned by Macbeth in the foregoing scene, has, before they enter upon the stage, given them the directions which were promised at the time of their agreement; and

therefore one of the murderers observes, that, since *he has given them such exact information, he needs not doubt of their performance.* Then by way of exhortation to his associates he cries out

——————To the direction just.

Now nothing remains but that we conform exactly to Macbeth's directions.

NOTE XXVIII.

SCENE V.

Macbeth. You know your own degrees, sit down:
At first and last the hearty welcome.

As this passage stands, not only the numbers are very imperfect, but the sense, if any can be found, weak and contemptible. The numbers will be improved by reading

——Sit down at first,
And last a hearty welcome.

But for *last* should then be written *next.* I believe the true reading is

You know your own degrees, sit down.—To first
And last the hearty welcome.

All of whatever degree, from the highest to the lowest, may be assured that their visit is well received.

NOTE XXIX.

Macbeth. ——There's blood upon thy face.
[*To the murderer aside at the door.*

Murderer. 'Tis Banquo's then.
Macbeth. 'Tis better *thee without, than he within.*

The sense apparently requires that this passage should be read thus:

'Tis better *thee* without, than *him* within.

That is, *I am more pleased that the blood of Banquo should be on thy face, than in his body.*

NOTE XXX.

Lady Macbeth. PROPER stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
[*Aside to Macbeth.*
This is the air-drawn dagger which you said
Led you to Duncan. Oh, these flaws and starts,
Impostures to true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Authoriz'd by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done
You look but on a stool.

As *starts* can neither with propriety nor sense be called *impostures to true fear*, something else was undoubtedly intended by the author, who perhaps wrote

———These flaws and starts,
Impostures true to fear, would well become
A woman's story———

These symptoms of terrour and amazement might better become *impostors true* only *to fear, might become a coward at the recital of such falsehoods as no man could credit whose understanding was not weakened by his terrours; tales, told by a woman over a fire on the authority of her grandam.*

NOTE XXXI.

Macbeth.—Love and health to all!
Then I 'll sit down: give me some wine, fill full—
I drink to the general joy of the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo whom we miss,
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.———

Though this passage is, as it now stands, capable of more meanings than one, none of them are very satisfactory; and therefore I am inclined to read it thus:

——To all, and him, we thirst,
And hail to all.

Macbeth, being about to salute his company with a bumper, declares that he includes Banquo, though absent, in this act of kindness, and wishes *health* to all. *Hail* or *heil* for *health* was in such continual use among the good-fellows of ancient times, that a drinker was called a *was-heiler*, or a *wisher of health*, and the liquor was termed *was-heil*, because *health* was so often *wished* over it. Thus in the lines of Hanvil the Monk,

Jamque vagante scypho, discincto gutture was-heil
Ingeminant was-heil: *labor est plus perdere vini*
Quam sitis.———

These words were afterwards corrupted into *was-sail* and *wassailer*.

NOTE XXXII.

Macbeth.——Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud

Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I *owe*,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheek,
When mine is blanched with fear.

This passage, as it now stands, is unintelligible, but may be restored to sense by a very slight alteration.

——————You make me strange
Ev'n to the disposition that I *know*.

Though I had before seen many instances of your courage, yet it now appears in a degree altogether new. *So that my long* acquaintance *with your* disposition *does not hinder me from that astonishment which* novelty *produces.*

NOTE XXXIII.

It will have blood, they say blood will have blood,
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak,
Augurs, that understood relations, have
By magpies, and by choughs, and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood.——

In this passage the first line loses much of its force by the present punctuation. Macbeth having considered the prodigy which has just appeared, infers justly from it, that the death of Duncan cannot pass unpunished,

It will have blood,——

Then after a short pause, declares it as the general observation of mankind, that murderers cannot escape.

——*They say, blood will have blood.*

Murderers, when they have practised all human

means of security, are detected by supernatural directions.

Augurs, that understand relations, &c.

By the word *relation* is understood the *connexion* of effects with causes; to *understand relations* as *an angur* is to know how those things *relate to* each other which have no visible combination or dependence.

NOTE XXXIV.

SCENE VII.

Enter Lenox and another Lord.

As this tragedy like the rest of Shakespeare's, is perhaps overstocked with personages, it is not easy to assign a reason, why a nameless character should be introduced here, since nothing is said that might not with equal propriety have been put into the mouth of any other disaffected man. I believe, therefore, that in the original copy, it was written with a very common form of contraction, *Lenox and An.* for which the transcriber instead of *Lenox and Angus,* set down *Lenox and another Lord.* The author had indeed been more indebted to the transcriber's fidelity and diligence, had he committed no errors of greater importance.

NOTE XXXV.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

As this is the chief scene of enchantment in the play, it is proper in this place to observe, with how much judgment Shakespeare has selected all the

circumstances of his infernal ceremonies, and how exactly he has conformed to common opinions and traditions.

Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

The usual form in which familiar spirits are reported to converse with witches, is that of a cat. A witch who was tried about half a century before the time of Shakespeare, had a cat named *Rutterkin*, as the spirit of one of those witches was *Grimalkin*; and when any mischief was to be done, she used to bid *Rutterkin go and fly*; but once when she would have sent *Rutterkin* to torment a daughter of the countess of Rutland, instead of *going* or *flying*, he only cried *mew*, from which she discovered that the lady was out of his power, the power of witches being not universal, but limited, as Shakespeare has taken care to inculcate.

Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest tost.

The common afflictions which the malice of witches produced were melancholy, fits, and loss of flesh, which are threatened by one of Shakespeare's witches.

Weary sev'nnights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine.

It was likewise their practice to destroy the cattle of their neighbours, and the farmers have to this day many ceremonies to secure their cows and other cattle from witchcraft; but they seem to have been most suspected of malice against swine. Shakespeare has accordingly made one of his witches declare that she has been *killing swine*; and Dr.

Harsenet observes, that about that time *a sow could not be ill of the measles, nor a girl of the sullens, but some old woman was charged with witchcraft.*

> Toad, that under the cold stone
> Days and nights has forty-one
> Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
> Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

Toads have likewise long lain under the reproach of being by some means necessary to witchcraft, for which reason Shakespeare, in the first scene of this play, calls one of the spirits *padocke* or *toad*, and now takes care to put a toad first into the pot. When Vaninus was seized at Thoulouse, there was found at his lodgings *ingens bufo vitro inclusus, a great toad shut in a vial*, upon which those that prosecuted him *veneficium exprobrabant, charged him*, I suppose, *with witchcraft.*

> Fillet of a fenny snake
> In the cauldron boil and bake;
> Eye of neut, and toe of frog;—
> For a charm, *&c.*

The propriety of these ingredients may be known by consulting the books *de Viribus Animalium* and *de Mirabilibus Mundi*, ascribed to Albertus Magnus, in which the reader, who has time and credulity, may discover very wonderful secrets.

> Finger of birth-strangled babe,
> Ditch-deliver'd by a drab;—

It has been already mentioned in the law against witches, that they are supposed to take up dead bodies to use in enchantments, which was confessed [illegible] man whom King James examined, and

who had of a dead body, that was divided in one of their assemblies, two fingers for her share. It is observable, that Shakespeare, on this great occasion which involves the fate of a king, multiplies all the circumstances of horrour. The babe whose finger is used, must be strangled in its birth; the grease must not only be human, but must have dropped from a gibbet, the gibbet of a murderer: and even the sow whose blood is used, must have offended nature by devouring her own farrow. These are touches of judgment and genius.

And now about the cauldron sing——

Blue spirits and white,
Black spirits and grey,
Mingle, mingle, mingle,
You that mingle may.

And in a former part,

Weird sisters hand in hand——
Thus do go about, about,
Thrice to mine, and thrice to thine,
And thrice again to make up nine.

These two passages I have brought together, because they both seem subject to the objection of too much levity for the solemnity of enchantment, and may both be shown, by one quotation from Camden's account of Ireland, to be founded upon a practice really observed by the uncivilized natives of that country. "When any one gets a fall, *says the informer of Camden*, he starts up, and *turning three times to the right*, digs a hole in the earth; for they imagine that there is a spirit in the ground; and if he falls sick in two or three days, they send one of

their women that is skilled in that way to the place, where she says, I call thee from the east, west, north, and south, from the groves, the woods, the rivers, and the fens, from the *fairies, red, black, white.*" There was likewise a book written before the time of Shakespeare, describing amongst other properties, the *colours* of spirits.

Many other circumstances might be particularized, in which Shakespeare has shown his judgment and his knowledge.

NOTE XXXVI.

SCENE II.

Macbeth. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo, down,
Thy crown does (1) sear my eye-balls, and thy (2) *hair*,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first,
A third is like the former.——

(1) The expression of Macbeth, that the *crown sears his* eye-balls, is taken from the method formerly practised of destroying the sight of captives or competitors, by holding a burning bason before the eye, which dried up its humidity.

(2) As Macbeth expected to see a train of kings, and was only enquiring from what race they would proceed, he could not be surprised that the *hair* of the second was *bound with gold* like that of the first; he was offended only that the second resembled the first, as the first resembled Banquo, and therefore said

——And thy *air*
gold-bound brow, is like the first.

NOTE XXXVII.

I WILL— give to the edge o' th' sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That *trace him in his line*—no boasting like a fool,
This deed I 'll do before my purpose cool.

Both the sense and measure of the third line, which as it rhymes, ought, according to the practice of this author, to be regular, are at present injured by two superfluous syllables, which may easily be removed by reading

——souls
That trace his line—no boasting like a fool.

NOTE XXXVIII.

SCENE III.

Rosse. DEAREST cousin
I pray you school yourself; but for your husband,
He 's noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' th' time, I dare not speak much farther,
But cruel are the times when we are traitors,
And do not know't ourselves: when we (1) *hold rumour*
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way, and (2) *move*. I 'll take my leave of you;
Shall not be long but I 'll be here again:
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upwards
To what they were before: my pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you.

(1) ——— When we hold rumour
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear.

The present reading seems to afford no sense; and therefore some critical experiments may be

properly tried upon it, though, the verses being without any connexion, there is room for suspicion, that some intermediate lines are lost, and that the passage is therefore irretrievable. If it be supposed that the fault arises only from the corruption of some words, and that the traces of the true reading are still to be found, the passage may be changed thus:

——When we *bode ruin*
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear.

Or in a sense very applicable to the occasion of the conference,

——When the *bold running*
From what they fear, yet know not what they fear.

(2) But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way, and move.

That he who *floats* upon a *rough sea* must move is evident, too evident for Shakespeare so emphatically to assert. The line therefore is to be written thus:

Each way, and move—I'll take my leave of you.

Rosse is about to proceed, but finding himself overpowered by his tenderness, breaks off abruptly for which he makes a short apology and retires.

NOTE XXXIX.

SCENE IV.

Malcolm. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macduff. Let us rather

Hold fast the mortal sword: and like good men,
Bestride our *downfal birth-doom*: each new morn,
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
Like syllables of dolour.

He who can discover what is meant by him that earnestly exhorts him to *bestride* his *downfal birth-doom*, is at liberty to adhere to the present text; but those who are willing to confess that such counsel would to them be unintelligible must endeavour to discover some reading less obscure. It is probable that Shakespeare wrote,

——Like good men,
Bestride our *downfaln birthdom*——

The allusion is to a man from whom something valuable is about to be taken by violence, and who that he may defend it without encumbrance, lays it on the ground, and stands over it with his weapon in his hand. Our birthdom, or birthright, says he, lies on the ground, let us, like men who are to fight for what is dearest to them, not abandon it, but stand over it and defend it. This is a strong picture of obstinate resolution.

Birthdom for *birthright* is formed by the same analogy with *masterdom* in this play, signifying the *privileges* or *rights* of a *master*.

Perhaps it might be *birth-dame* for *mother;* let us stand over our mother that lies bleeding on the ground.

NOTE XL.

Malcolm. Now we'll together, and the *chance of goodness*
Be like our warranted quarrel.

The *chance of goodness*, as it is commonly read, conveys no sense. If there be not some more important errour in the passage, it should at least be pointed thus:

——And the chance, of goodness,
Be like our warranted quarrel,

That is, May the event be, of the goodness of heaven [*pro justicia divina*], answerable to the cause.

But I am inclined to believe that Shakespeare wrote,

——And the chance, O goodness,
Be like our warranted quarrel.

This some of his transcribers wrote with a small *o*, which another imagined to mean *of*. If we adopt this reading, the sense will be, *and O thou sovereign goodness to whom we now appeal, may our fortune answer to our cause.*

NOTE XLI.

ACT V. SCENE III.

Macbeth. BRING me no more reports, let them fly all,
'Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman?
——Fly false Thanes,
gle with the English epicures.

In the first line of this speech, the proper pauses are not observed in the present editions.

Bring me no more reports—let them fly all—

Tell me not any more of desertions—Let all my subjects leave me—I am safe till, &c.

The reproach ef epicurism, on which Mr. Theobald has bestowed a note, is nothing more than a natural invective uttered by an inhabitant of a barren country, against those who have more opportunities of luxury.

NOTE XLII.

Macbeth. I HAVE liv'd long enough: my *way* of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf.

As there is no relation between the *way of life*, and *fallen into the sear*, I am inclined to think, that the *W* is only an *M* inverted, and that it was originally written, My *May* of life.

I am now passed from the spring to the autumn of my days, but I am without those comforts that should succeed the sprightliness of bloom, and support me in this melancholy season.

NOTE XLIII.

SCENE IV.

Malcolm. 'TIS his main hope:
For where there is *advantage to be given*,
Both more or less have given him the revolt;
And none serve with him but constrained things,
Whose hearts are absent too.

NOTE XL.

Malcolm. Now we'll together, and
goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel.

The *chance of goodness*, as it
conveys no sense. If there be
portant errour in the passage,
pointed thus:

——And the chance,
Be like our warranted

That is, May the event be
ven [*pro justicia divina*]

But I am inclined t
wrote,

——And th
Be like our wa

This some of his
o, which another im
this reading, the se
goodness to whom
answer to our c

espeare

and less.
k of that
and the less.

hat cry?
ave died hereafter;
r such a *word.*
o-morrow,
day to day,
orded time;
ighted fools
Out, out, brief candle!

hereafter,
a time for such a *word.*

ery justly been suspected of
is not apparent for what *word*
me; and that there would
any *word*, seems not a
sufficient to transport

Macbeth into the following exclamation. I read therefore,

(1) She should have died hereafter,
There would have been a time for—such a *world!*—
To-morrow, *&c.*

It is a broken speech, in which only part of the thought is expressed, and may be paraphrased thus: *The queen is dead.* Macbeth. *Her death should have been deferred to some more peaceful hour; had she lived longer,* there would at length have been a time for *the honours due to her as a queen, and that respect which I owe her for her fidelity and love Such is the* world—*such is the condition of human life, that we always think* to-morrow *will be happier than to-day; but to-morrow and to-morrow steals over us unenjoyed and unregarded, and we still linger in the same expectation to the moment appointed for our end. All these days, which have thus passed away, have sent multitudes of fools to the grave who were engrossed by the same dream of future felicity, and, when life was departing from them, were like me reckoning on to-morrow.*

(2) To the last syllable of recorded time.

Recorded time seems to signify the time fixed in the decrees of heaven for the period of life. The *records* of *futurity* is indeed no accurate expression, but as we only know transactions past or present, the language of men affords no term for the volumes of prescience, in which future events may be supposed to be written.

NOTE XLV.

Macbeth. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive
Till famine cling thee: if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much——
I *pull* in resolution, and begin
To doubt th' equivocation of the fiend,
That lies like truth. "Fear not till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane," and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane.

I *pull* in resolution——

Though this is the reading of all the editions, yet as it is a phrase without either example, elegance, or propriety, it is surely better to read

I *pall* in resolution——

I languish in my constancy, my confidence begins to forsake me. It is scarcely necessary to observe how easily *pall* might be changed into *pull* by a negligent writer, or mistaken for it by an unskilful printer.

NOTE XLVI.

SCENE VIII.

Seyward. Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so his knell is knoll'd.

This incident is thus related from Henry of Huntingdon by Camden in his "Remains," from which our author probably copied it.

When Seyward, the martial Earl of Northumber-

land, understood that his son, whom he had sent in service against the Scotchmen, was slain, he demanded whether his wound were in the fore part or hinder part of his body. When it was answered in the fore part, he replied, "I am right glad; neither wish I any other death to me or mine."

AFTER the foregoing pages were printed, the late edition of Shakespeare, ascribed to Sir Thomas Hanmer, fell into my hands; and it was therefore convenient for me to delay the publication of my remarks till I had examined whether they were not anticipated by similar observations, or precluded by better. I therefore read over this tragedy, but found that the editor's apprehension is of a cast so different from mine, that he appears to find no difficulty in most of those passages which I have represented as unintelligible, and has therefore passed smoothly over them, without any attempt to alter or explain them.

Some of the lines with which I had been perplexed, have been indeed so fortunate as to attract his regard; and it is not without all the satisfaction which it is usual to express on such occasions, that I find an entire agreement between us in substituting [see Note II.] *quarrel* for *quarry*, and in explaining the adage of the *cat*, [Note XVII.] But this pleasure is, like most others, known only to be regretted; for I have the unhappiness to find no such conformity with regard to any other passage.

The line which I have endeavoured to amend, Note XI. is likewise attempted by the new editor,

and is perhaps the only passage in the play in which he has not submissively admitted the emendations of foregoing critics. Instead of the common reading,

——Doing every thing
Safe towards your love and honour,

he has published,

——Doing every thing
Shap'd towards your love and honour.

This alteration, which, like all the rest attempted by him, the reader is expected to admit, without any reason alleged in its defence, is, in my opinion, more plausible than that of Mr. Theobald: whether it is right, I am not to determine.

In the passage which I have altered in Note XL. an emendation is likewise attempted in the late edition, where, for

——And the chance *of* goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel,

is substituted—And the chance *in* goodness—whether with more or less elegance, dignity, and propriety, than the reading which I have offered, I must again decline the province of deciding.

Most of the other emendations which he has endeavoured, whether with good or bad fortune, are too trivial to deserve mention. For surely the weapons of criticism ought not to be blunted against an editor, who can imagine that he is restoring poetry, while he is amusing himself with alterations like these:

For——*This is the serjeant,*
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought;

——This is the sergeant, who
Like a *right* good and hardy soldier fought.

For——Dismay'd not this
Our captains Macbeth and Banquo?—Yes;

——Dismay'd not this
Our captains *brave* Macbeth and Banquo?—Yes.

Such harmless industry may, surely, be forgiven, if it cannot be praised: may he therefore never want a monosyllable, who can use it with such wonderful dexterity.

Rumpatur quisquis rumpitur invidia!

The rest of this edition I have not read, but, from the little that I have seen, think it not dangerous to declare that, in my opinion, its pomp recommends it more than its accuracy. There is no distinction made between the ancient reading, and the innovations of the editor; there is no reason given for any of the alterations which are made; the emendations of former critics are adopted without any acknowledgement, and few of the difficulties are removed which have hitherto embarrassed the readers of Shakespeare.

I would not however be thought to insult the editor, nor to censure him with too much petulance, for having failed in little things, of whom I have been told, that he excels in greater. But I may without indecency observe, that no man should attempt to teach others what he has never learned himself; and that those who, like Themistocles, have studied the arts of policy, and *can teach a small state how to*

grow great, should, like him, disdain to labour in trifles, and consider petty accomplishments as below their ambition*.

* To this article, when first printed, Dr. Johnson affixed Proposals for a new edition of Shakespeare, to be printed in 10 vols. 18mo. the price to subscribers 1*l.* 5*s.* in sheets, of which half a guinea was to be paid at the time of subscribing, but the size and price were afterwards increased. He afterwards published the following more enlarged proposals. C.

PROPOSALS

FOR PRINTING THE

DRAMATIC WORKS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1756.

WHEN the works of Shakespeare are, after so many editions, again offered to the Publick, it will doubtless be inquired, why Shakespeare stands in more need of critical assistance than any other of the English writers, and what are the deficiencies of the late attempts, which another editor may hope to supply?

The business of him that republishes an ancient book is, to correct what is corrupt, and to explain what is obscure. To have a text corrupt in many places, and in many doubtful, is, among the authors that have written since the use of types, almost peculiar to Shakespeare. Most writers, by publishing their own works, prevent all various readings, and preclude all conjectural criticism. Books indeed are sometimes published after the death of him who produced them; but they are better secured from corruption than these unfor-

tunate compositions. They subsist in a single copy, written or revised by the author; and the faults of the printed volume can be only faults of one descent.

But of the works of Shakespeare the condition has been far different: he sold them, not to be printed, but to be played. They were immediately copied for the actors, and multiplied by transcript after transcript, vitiated by the blunders of the penman, or changed by the affectation of the player; perhaps enlarged to introduce a jest, or mutilated to shorten the representation; and printed at last without the concurrence of the author, without the consent of the proprietor, from compilations made by chance or by stealth out of the separate parts written for the theatre; and thus thrust into the world surreptitiously and hastily, they suffered another depravation from the ignorance and negligence of the printers, as every man who knows the state of the press in that age will readily conceive.

It is not easy for invention to bring together so many causes concurring to vitiate the text. No other author ever gave up his works to fortune and time with so little care: no books could be left in hands so likely to injure them, as plays frequently acted, yet continued in manuscript: no other transcribers were likely to be so little qualified for their task as those who copied for the stage, at a time when the lower ranks of the people were universally illiterate: no other editions were made from fragments so minutely broken, and so fortuitously re-united; and in no other age was the art of printing in such unskilful hands.

With the causes of corruption that make the revisal of Shakespeare's dramatick pieces necessary, may be enumerated the causes of obscurity, which may be partly imputed to his age, and partly to himself.

When a writer outlives his contemporaries, and remains almost the only unforgotten name of a distant time, he is necessarily obscure. Every age has its modes of speech, and its cast of thought; which, though easily explained when there are many books to be compared with each other, become sometimes unintelligible and always difficult, when there are no parallel passages that may conduce to their illustration. Shakespeare is the first considerable author of sublime or familiar dialogue in our language. Of the books which he read, and from which he formed his style, some perhaps have perished, and the rest are neglected. His imitations are therefore unnoted, his allusions are undiscovered, and many beauties, both of pleasantry and greatness, are lost with the objects to which they were united, as the figures vanish when the canvass has decayed.

It is the great excellence of Shakespeare, that he drew his scenes from nature, and from life. He copied the manners of the world then passing before him, and has more allusions than other poets to the traditions and superstition of the vulgar; which must therefore be traced before he can be understood.

He wrote at a time when our poetical language was yet unformed, when the meaning of our phrases was yet in fluctuation, when words were adopted at

pleasure from the neighbouring languages, and while the Saxon was still visibly mingled in our diction. The reader is therefore embarrassed at once with dead and with foreign languages, with obsoleteness and innovation. In that age, as in all others, fashion produced phraseology, which succeeding fashion swept away before its meaning was generally known, or sufficiently authorised: and in that age, above all others, experiments were made upon our language, which distorted its combinations, and disturbed its uniformity.

If Shakespeare has difficulties above other writers, it is to be imputed to the nature of his work, which required the use of the common colloquial language, and consequently admitted many phrases allusive, elliptical, and proverbial, such as we speak and hear every hour without observing them; and of which, being now familiar, we do not suspect that they can ever grow uncouth, or that, being now obvious, they can ever seem remote.

These are the principal causes of the obscurity of Shakespeare; to which might be added the fulness of idea, which might sometimes load his words with more sentiment than they could conveniently convey, and that rapidity of imagination which might hurry him to a second thought before he had fully explained the first. But my opinion is, that very few of his lines were difficult to his audience, and that he used such expressions as were then common, though the paucity of contemporary writers makes them now seem peculiar.

Authors are often praised for improvement, or [illegible]ned for innovation, with very little justice, by

those who read few other books of the same age. Addison himself has been so unsuccessful in enumerating the words with which Milton has enriched our language, as perhaps not to have named one of which Milton was the author; and Bentley has yet more unhappily praised him as the introducer of those elisions into English poetry, which had been used from the first essays of versification among us, and which Milton was indeed the last that practised.

Another impediment, not the least vexatious to the commentator, is the exactness with which Shakespeare followed his authors. Instead of dilating his thoughts into generalities, and expressing incidents with poetical latitude, he often combines circumstances unnecessary to his main design, only because he happened to find them together. Such passages can be illustrated only by him who has read the same story in the very book which Shakespeare consulted.

He that undertakes an edition of Shakespeare, has all these difficulties to encounter, and all these obstructions to remove.

The corruptions of the text will be corrected by a careful collation of the oldest copies, by which it is hoped that many restorations may yet be made: at least it will be necessary to collect and note the variation as materials for future criticks; for it very often happens that a wrong reading has affinity to the right.

In this part all the present editions are apparently and intentionally defective. The criticks did not so much as wish to facilitate the labour of those that followed them. The same books are still to be

compared; the work that has been done, is to be done again; and no single edition will supply the reader with a text on which he can rely as the best copy of the works of Shakespeare.

The edition now proposed will at least have this advantage over others. It will exhibit all the observable varieties of all the copies that can be found; that, if the reader is not satisfied with the editor's determination, he may have the means of choosing better for himself.

Where all the books are evidently vitiated, and collation can give no assistance, then begins the task of critical sagacity: and some changes may well be admitted in a text never settled by the author, and so long exposed to caprice and ignorance. But nothing shall be imposed, as in the Oxford edition, without notice of the alteration; nor shall conjecture be wantonly or unnecessarily indulged.

It has been long found, that very specious emendations do not equally strike all minds with conviction, nor even the same mind at different times; and therefore, though perhaps many alterations may be proposed as eligible, very few will be obtruded as certain. In a language so ungrammatical as the English, and so licentious as that of Shakespeare, emendatory criticism is always hazardous; nor can it be allowed to any man who is not particularly versed in the writings of that age, and particularly studious of his author's diction. There is danger lest peculiarities should be mistaken for corruptions, and passages rejected as unintelligible, which a narrow mind happens not to understand.

All the former criticks have been so much em-

ployed on the correction of the text, that they have not sufficiently attended to the elucidation of passages obscured by accident or time. The editor will endeavour to read the books which the author read, to trace his knowledge to its source, and compare his copies with their originals. If in this part of his design he hopes to attain any degree of superiority to his predecessors, it must be considered, that he has the advantage of their labours; that part of the work being already done, more care is naturally bestowed on the other part; and that, to declare the truth, Mr. Rowe and Mr. Pope were very ignorant of the ancient English literature; Dr. Warburton was detained by more important studies; and Mr. Theobald, if fame be just to his memory, considered learning only as an instrument of gain, and made no further enquiry after his author's meaning, when once he had notes sufficient to embellish his page with the expected decorations.

With regard to obsolete or peculiar diction, the editor may perhaps claim some degree of confidence, having had more motives to consider the whole extent of our language than any other man from its first formation. He hopes that, by comparing the works of Shakespeare with those of writers who lived at the same time, immediately preceded, or immediately followed him, he shall be able to ascertain his ambiguities, disentangle his intricacies, and recover the meaning of words now lost in the darkness of antiquity.

When therefore any obscurity arises from an allusion to some other book, the passage will be quoted. When the diction is entangled, it will be cleared by a

paraphrase or interpretation. When the sense is broken by the suppression of part of the sentiment in pleasantry or passion, the connexion will be supplied. When any forgotten custom is hinted, care will be taken to retrieve and explain it. The meaning assigned to doubtful words will be supported by the authorities of other writers, or by parallel passages of Shakespeare himself.

The observation of faults and beauties is one of the duties of an annotator, which some of Shakespeare's editors have attempted, and some have neglected. For this part of his task, and for this only, was Mr. Pope eminently and indisputably qualified; nor has Dr. Warburton followed him with less diligence or less success. But I have never observed that mankind was much delighted or improved by their asterisks, commas, or double commas; of which the only effect is, that they preclude the pleasure of judging for ourselves, teach the young and ignorant to decide without principles; defeat curiosity and discernment, by leaving them less to discover; and at last shew the opinion of the critick, without the reasons on which it was founded, and without affording any light by which it may be examined.

The editor, though he may less delight his own vanity, will probably please his reader more, by supposing him equally able with himself to judge of beauties and faults, which require no previous acquisition of remote knowledge. A description of the obvious scenes of nature, a representation of general life, a sentiment of reflection or experience, a deduction of conclusive arguments, a forcible eruption of effervescent passion, are to be considered as proportionate

to common apprehension, unassisted by critical officiousness; since, to convince them, nothing more is requisite than acquaintance with the general state of the world, and those faculties which he must almost bring with him who would read Shakespeare.

But when the beauty arises from some adaptation of the sentiment to customs worn out of use, to opinions not universally prevalent, or to any accidental or minute particularity, which cannot be supplied by common understanding, or common observation, it is the duty of a commentator to lend his assistance.

The notice of beauties and faults thus limited, will make no distinct part of the design, being reducible to the explanation of obscure passages.

The editor does not however intend to preclude himself from the comparison of Shakespeare's sentiments or expression with those of ancient or modern authors, or from the display of any beauty not obvious to the students of poetry; for as he hopes to leave his author better understood, he wishes likewise to procure him more rational approbation.

The former editors have affected to slight their predecessors: but in this edition all that is valuable will be adopted from every commentator, that posterity may consider it as including all the rest, and exhibiting whatever is hitherto known of the great father of the English drama.

PREFACE

TO

SHAKESPEARE.

PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1768.

THAT praises are without reason lavished on the dead, and that the honours due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, is a complaint likely to be always continued by those, who, being able to add nothing to truth, hope for eminence from the heresies of paradox; or those, who, being forced by disappointment upon consolatory expedients, are willing to hope from posterity what the present age refuses, and flatter themselves that the regard, which is yet denied by envy, will be at last bestowed by time.

Antiquity, like every other quality that attracts the notice of mankind, has undoubtedly votaries that reverence it, not from reason, but from prejudice. Some seem to admire indiscriminately, whatever has been long preserved, without considering that time has sometimes co-operated with chance; all perhaps are more willing to honour

past than present excellence; and the mind contemplates genius through the shades of age, as the eye surveys the sun through artificial opacity. The great contention of criticism is to find the faults of the moderns, and the beauties of the ancients. While an author is yet living we estimate his powers by his worst performance, and when he is dead, we rate them by his best.

To works, however, of which the excellence is not absolute and definite, but gradual and comparative; to works not raised upon principles demonstrative and scientifick, but appealing wholly to observation and experience, no other test can be applied than length of duration and continuance of esteem. What mankind have long possessed they have often examined and compared; and if they persist to value the possession, it is because frequent comparisons have confirmed opinion in its favour. As among the works of nature no man can properly call a river deep, or a mountain high, without the knowledge of many mountains, and many rivers; so, in the productions of genius, nothing can be styled excellent till it has been compared with other works of the same kind. Demonstration immediately displays its power, and has nothing to hope or fear from the flux of years; but works tentative and experimental must be estimated by their proportion to the general and collective ability of man, as it is discovered in a long succession of endeavours. Of the first building that was raised, it might be with certainty determined that it was round or square; but whether it was spacious or lofty must have been referred to time. The Pythagorean scale of

numbers was at once discovered to be perfect; but the poems of Homer we yet know not to transcend the common limits of human intelligence, but by remarking that nation after nation, and century after century, has been able to do little more than transpose his incidents, new-name his characters, and paraphrase his sentiments.

The reverence due to writings that have long subsisted, arises therefore not from any credulous confidence in the superior wisdom of past ages, or gloomy persuasion of the degeneracy of mankind, but is the consequence of acknowledged and indubitable positions, that what has been longest known has been most considered, and what is most considered is best understood.

The poet, of whose works I have undertaken the revision, may now begin to assume the dignity of an ancient, and claim the privilege of established fame and prescriptive veneration. He has long outlived his century, the term commonly fixed as the test of literary merit. Whatever advantages he might once derive from personal allusions, local customs, or temporary opinions, have for many years been lost; and every topick of merriment, or motive of sorrow, which the modes of artificial life afforded him, now only obscure the scenes which they once illuminated. The effects of favour and competition are at an end; the tradition of his friendships and his enmities has perished; his works support no opinion with arguments, nor supply any faction with invectives; they can neither indulge vanity, nor gratify malignity; but are read without any other reason than the desire of pleasure, and are therefore praised only as

pleasure is obtained; yet, thus unassisted by interest or passion, they have passed through variations of taste and changes of manners, and, as they devolved from one generation to another, have received new honours at every transmission.

But because human judgment, though it be gradually gaining upon certainty, never becomes infallible; and approbation, though long continued, may yet be only the approbation of prejudice or fashion; it is proper to inquire, by what peculiarities of excellence Shakespeare has gained and kept the favour of his countrymen.

Nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of general nature. Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied. The irregular combinations of fanciful invention may delight awhile, by that novelty of which the common satiety of life sends us all in quest; but the pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted, and the mind can only repose on the stability of truth.

Shakespeare is, above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world; by the peculiarities of studies or professions, which can operate but upon small numbers; or by the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions: they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons act and speak by the influence of those

general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole system of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets a character is too often an individual: in those of Shakespeare it is commonly a species.

It is from this wide extension of design that so much instruction is derived. It is this which fills the plays of Shakespeare with practical axioms and domestic wisdom. It was said of Euripides, that every verse was a precept; and it may be said of Shakespeare, that from his works may be collected a system of civil and œconomical prudence. Yet his real power is not shewn in the splendor of particular passages, but by the progress of his fable, and the tenor of his dialogue: and he that tries to recommend him by select quotations, will succeed like the pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his house to sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen.

It will not easily be imagined how much Shakespeare excels in accommodating his sentiments to real life, but by comparing him with other authors. It was observed of the ancient schools of declamation, that the more diligently they were frequented, the more was the student disqualified for the world, because he found nothing there which he should ever meet in any other place. The same remark may be applied to every stage but that of Shakespeare. The theatre, when it is under any other direction, is peopled by such characters as were never seen, conversing in a language which was never heard, upon topicks which will never arise in the commerce of mankind. But the dialogue of this author is often so evidently determined by the inci-

dent which produces it, and is pursued with so much ease and simplicity, that it seems scarcely to claim the merit of fiction, but to have been gleaned by diligent selection out of common conversation, and common occurrences.

Upon every other stage the universal agent is love, by whose power all good and evil is distributed, and every action quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppositions of interest, and harass them with violence of desires inconsistent with each other; to make them meet in rapture, and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical joy and outrageous sorrow; to distress them as nothing human ever was distressed; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered; is the business of a modern dramatist. For this, probability is violated, life is misrepresented, and language is depraved. But love is only one of many passions; and as it has no great influence upon the sum of life, it has little operation in the dramas of a poet, who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhibited only what he saw before him. He knew that any other passion, as it was regular or exorbitant, was a cause of happiness or calamity.

Characters thus ample and general were not easily discriminated and preserved, yet perhaps no poet ever kept his personages more distinct from each other. I will not say with Pope, that every speech may be assigned to the proper speaker, because many speeches there are which have nothing characteristical; but, perhaps, though some may be

equally adapted to every person, it will be difficult to find that any can be properly transferred from the present possessor to another claimant. The choice is right, when there is reason for choice.

Other dramatists can only gain attention by hyperbolical or aggravated characters, by fabulous and unexampled excellence or depravity, as the writers of barbarous romances invigorated the reader by a giant and a dwarf; and he that should form his expectations of human affairs from the play, or from the tale, would be equally deceived. Shakespeare has no heroes; his scenes are occupied only by men, who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion: even where the agency is supernatural, the dialogue is level with life. Other writers disguise the most natural passions and most frequent incidents; so that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world: Shakespeare approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful; the event which he represents will not happen, but, if it were possible, its effects would probably be such as he has assigned*; and it may be said, that he has not only shewn human nature as it acts in real exigencies, but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be exposed.

This therefore is the praise of Shakespeare, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms

* "Quærit quod nusquam est gentium, reperit tamen,
Facit illud verisimile quod mendacium est."

Plauti Pseudolus, Act. I. Sc. iv. STEEVENS.

which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecstacies, by reading human sentiments in human language, by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions.

His adherence to general nature has exposed him to the censure of criticks, who form their judgments upon narrower principles. Dennis and Rymer think his *Romans* not sufficiently *Roman;* and Voltaire censures his kings as not completely royal. Dennis is offended, that Menenius, a senator of Rome, should play the buffoon; and Voltaire perhaps thinks decency violated when the Danish usurper is represented as a drunkard. But Shakespeare always makes nature predominate over accident; and, if he preserves the essential character, is not very careful of distinctions superinduced and adventitious. His story requires Romans or kings, but he thinks only on men. He knew that Rome, like every other city, had men of all dispositions; and wanting a buffoon, he went into the senate-house for that which the senate-house would certainly have afforded him. He was inclined to shew an usurper and a murderer not only odious, but despicable; he therefore added drunkenness to his other qualities, knowing that kings love wine like other men, and that wine exerts its natural power upon kings. These are the petty cavils of petty minds; a poet overlooks the casual distinction of country and condition, as a painter, satisfied with the figure, neglects the drapery.

The censure which he has incurred by mixing comick and tragick scenes, as it extends to all his

works, deserves more consideration. Let the fact be first stated, and then examined.

Shakespeare's plays are not in the rigorous and critical sense either tragedies or comedies, but compositions of a distinct kind; exhibiting the real state of sublunary nature, which partakes of good and evil, joy and sorrow, mingled with endless variety of proportion and innumerable modes of combination; and expressing the course of the world, in which the loss of one is the gain of another; in which, at the same time, the reveller is hasting to his wine, and the mourner burying his friend; in which the malignity of one is sometimes defeated by the frolick of another; and many mischiefs and many benefits are done and hindered without design.

Out of this chaos of mingled purposes and casualties the ancient poets, according to the laws which custom had prescribed, selected some the crimes of men, and some their absurdities; some the momentous vicissitudes of life, and some the lighter occurrences; some the terrors of distress, and some the gaietics of prosperity. Thus rose the two modes of imitation, known by the names of *tragedy* and *comedy*, compositions intended to promote different ends by contrary means, and considered as so little allied, that I do not recollect among the Greeks or Romans a single writer who attempted both.

Shakespeare has united the powers of exciting laughter and sorrow not only in one mind, but in one composition. Almost all his plays are divided between serious and ludicrous characters, and, in the successive evolutions of the design, sometimes pro-

duce seriousness and sorrow, and sometimes levity and laughter.

That this is a practice contrary to the rules of criticism will be readily allowed; but there is always an appeal open from criticism to nature. The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing. That the mingled drama may convey all the instruction of tragedy or comedy cannot be denied, because it includes both in its alternations of exhibition, and approaches nearer than either to the appearance of life, by shewing how great machinations and slender designs may promote or obviate one another, and the high and the low co-operate in the general system by unavoidable concatenation.

It is objected, that by this change of scenes the passions are interrupted in their progression, and that the principal event, being not advanced by a due gradation of preparatory incidents, wants at last the power to move, which constitutes the perfection of dramatick poetry. This reasoning is so specious, that it is received as true even by those who in daily experience feel it to be false. The interchanges of mingled scenes seldom fail to produce the intended vicissitudes of passion. Fiction cannot move so much, but that the attention may be easily transferred; and though it must be allowed that pleasing melancholy be sometimes interrupted by unwelcome levity, yet let it be considered likewise, that melancholy is often not pleasing, and that the disturbance of one man may be the relief of another; that different auditors have different habitudes; and that, upon the whole, all pleasure consists in variety.

The players, who in their edition divided our author's works into comedies, histories, and tragedies, seem not to have distinguished the three kinds by any very exact or definite ideas.

An action which ended happily to the principal persons, however serious or distressful through its intermediate incidents, in their opinion, constituted a comedy. This idea of a comedy continued long amongst us; and plays were written, which, by changing the catastrophe, were tragedies to-day, and comedies to-morrow.

Tragedy was not in those times a poem of more general dignity or elevation than comedy; it required only a calamitous conclusion, with which the common criticism of that age was satisfied, whatever light pleasure it afforded in its progress.

History was a series of actions, with no other than chronological succession, independent on each other, and without any tendency to introduce or regulate the conclusion. It is not always very nicely distinguished from tragedy. There is not much nearer approach to unity of action in the tragedy of "Antony and Cleopatra," than in the history of "Richard the Second." But a history might be continued through many plays; as it had no plan, it had no limits.

Through all these denominations of the drama, Shakespeare's mode of composition is the same; an interchange of seriousness and merriment, by which the mind is softened at one time, and exhilarated at another. But whatever be his purpose, whether to gladden or depress, or to conduct the story, without vehemence or emotion, through tracts of easy and

familiar dialogue, he never fails to attain his purpose; as he commands us, we laugh or mourn, or sit silent with quiet expectation, in tranquillity without indifference.

When Shakespeare's plan is understood, most of the criticisms of Rymer and Voltaire vanish away. The play of "Hamlet" is opened, without impropriety, by two centinels; Iago bellows at Brabantio's window, without injury to the scheme of the play, though in terms which a modern audience would not easily endure; the character of Polonius is seasonable and useful; and the grave-diggers themselves may be heard with applause.

Shakespeare engaged in dramatic poetry with the world open before him; the rules of the ancients were yet known to few; the publick judgment was unformed; he had no example of such fame as might force him upon imitation, nor criticks of such authority as might restrain his extravagance: he therefore indulged his natural disposition; and his disposition, as Rymer has remarked, led him to comedy. In tragedy he often writes, with great appearance of toil and study, what is written at last with little felicity; but, in his comick scenes, he seems to produce, without labour, what no labour can improve. In tragedy he is always struggling after some occasion to be comick; but in comedy he seems to repose, or to luxuriate, as in a mode of thinking congenial to his nature. In his tragick scenes there is always something wanting, but his comedy often surpasses expectation or desire. His comedy pleases by the thoughts and the language, and his tragedy for the greater part by incident and action. His tragedy seems to be skill, his comedy to be instinct.

The force of his comick scenes has suffered little diminution from the changes made by a century and a half, in manners or in words. As his personages act upon principles arising from genuine passion, very little modified by particular forms, their pleasures and vexations are communicable to all times and to all places; they are natural, and therefore durable: the adventitious peculiarities of personal habits are only superficial dyes, bright and pleasing for a little while, yet soon fading to a dim tinct, without any remains of former lustre; but the discriminations of true passion are the colours of nature: they pervade the whole mass, and can only perish with the body that exhibits them. The accidental compositions of heterogeneous modes are dissolved by the chance which combined them; but the uniform simplicity of primitive qualities neither admits increase, nor suffers decay. The sand heaped by one flood is scattered by another, but the rock always continues in its place. The stream of time, which is continually washing the dissoluble fabricks of other poets, passes without injury by the adamant of Shakespeare.

If there be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a style which never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language, as to remain settled and unaltered; this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modish innovations, and the learned depart from established forms of

speech, in hope of finding or making better; those who wish for distinction forsake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right; but there is a conversation above grossness, and below refinement, where propriety resides, and where this poet seems to have gathered his comick dialogue. He is therefore more agreeable to the ears of the present age than any other author equally remote, and among his other excellencies deserves to be studied as one of the original masters of our language.

These observations are to be considered not as unexceptionably constant, but as containing general and predominant truth. Shakespeare's familiar dialogue is affirmed to be smooth and clear, yet not wholly without ruggedness or difficulty; as a country may be eminently fruitful, though it has spots unfit for cultivation: his characters are praised as natural, though their sentiments are sometimes forced, and their actions improbable; as the earth upon the whole is spherical, though its surface is varied with protuberances and cavities.

Shakespeare with his excellencies has likewise faults, and faults sufficient to obscure and overwhelm any other merit. I shall shew them in the proportion in which they appear to me, without envious malignity or superstitious veneration. No question can be more innocently discussed than a dead poet's pretensions to renown; and little regard is due to that bigotry which sets candour higher than truth.

His first defect is that to which may be imputed most of the evil in books or in men. He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write

without any moral purpose. From his writings indeed a system of social duty may be selected, for he that thinks reasonably must think morally; but his precepts and axioms drop casually from him; he makes no just distribution of good or evil, nor is always careful to shew in the virtuous a disapprobation of the wicked; he carries his persons indifferently through right and wrong, and at the close dismisses them without further care, and leaves their examples to operate by chance. This fault the barbarity of his age cannot extenuate; for it is always a writer's duty to make the world better, and justice is a virtue independent on time or place.

The plots are often so loosely formed, that a very slight consideration may improve them, and so carelessly pursued, that he seems not always fully to comprehend his own design. He omits opportunities of instructing or delighting, which the train of his story seems to force upon him, and apparently rejects those exhibitions which would be more affecting, for the sake of those which are more easy.

It may be observed, that in many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found himself near the end of his work, and in view of his reward, he shortened the labour to snatch the profit. He therefore remits his efforts where he should most vigorously exert them, and his catastrophe is improbably produced or imperfectly represented.

He had no regard to distinction of time or place, but gives to one age or nation, without scruple, the customs, institutions, and opinions of another, at the expence not only of likelihood, but of possibility. These faults Pope has endeavoured, with more zeal

than judgment, to transfer to his imagined interpolators. We need not wonder to find Hector quoting Aristotle, when we see the loves of Theseus and Hippolyta combined with the gothick mythology of fairies. Shakespeare, indeed, was not the only violator of chronology, for in the same age Sidney, who wanted not the advantages of learning, has, in his "Arcadia," confounded the pastoral with the feudal times, the days of innocence, quiet, and security, with those of turbulence, violence, and adventure.

In his comick scenes he is seldom very successful, when he engages his characters in reciprocations of smartness and contests of sarcasm: their jests are commonly gross, and their pleasantry licentious; neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are sufficiently distinguished from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners. Whether he represented the real conversation of his time is not easy to determine: the reign of Elizabeth is commonly supposed to have been a time of stateliness, formality, and reserve; yet perhaps the relaxations of that severity were not very elegant. There must, however, have been always some modes of gaiety preferable to others, and a writer ought to chuse the best.

In tragedy his performance seems constantly to be worse, as his labour is more. The effusions of passion, which exigence forces out, are for the most part striking and energetick; but whenever he solicits his invention, or strains his faculties, the offspring of his throes is tumor, meanness, tediousness, and obscurity.

In narration he affects a disproportionate pomp of diction, and a wearisome train of circumlocution, and tells the incident imperfectly in many words, which might have been more plainly delivered in few. Narration in dramatick poetry is naturally tedious, as it is unanimated and inactive, and obstructs the progress of the action; it should therefore always be rapid, and enlivened by frequent interruption. Shakespeare found it an incumbrance, and instead of lightening it by brevity, endeavoured to recommend it by dignity and splendour.

His declamations or set speeches are commonly cold and weak, for his power was the power of nature; when he endeavoured, like other tragick writers, to catch opportunities of amplification, and instead of inquiring what the occasion demanded, to shew how much his stores of knowledge could supply, he seldom escapes without the pity or resentment of his reader.

It is incident to him to be now and then entangled with an unwieldy sentiment, which he cannot well express, and will not reject; he struggles with it a while, and, if it continues stubborn, comprises it in words such as occur, and leaves it to be disentangled and evolved by those who have more leisure to bestow upon it.

Not that always where the language is intricate the thought is subtle, or the image always great where the line is bulky; the equality of words to things is very often neglected, and trivial sentiments and vulgar ideas disappoint the attention, to which they are recommended by sonorous epithets and swelling figures.

But the admirers of this great poet have most reason to complain when he approaches nearest to his highest excellence, and seems fully resolved to sink them in dejection, and mollify them with tender emotions, by the fall of greatness, the danger of innocence, or the crosses of love. What he does best, he soon ceases to do. He is not soft and pathetick without some idle conceit, or contemptible equivocation. He no sooner begins to move, than he counteracts himself; and terror and pity, as they are rising in the mind, are checked and blasted by sudden frigidity.

A quibble is to Shakespeare, what luminous vapours are to the traveller; he follows it at all adventures: it is sure to lead him out of his way, and sure to engulf him in the mire. It has some malignant power over his mind, and its fascinations are irresistible. Whatever be the dignity or profundity of his disquisition, whether he be enlarging knowledge or exalting affection, whether he be amusing attention with incidents, or enchaining it in suspense, let but a quibble spring up before him, and he leaves his work unfinished. A quibble is the golden apple for which he will always turn aside from his career, or stoop from his elevation. A quibble, poor and barren as it is, gave him such delight, that he was content to purchase it, by the sacrifice of reason, propriety, and truth. A quibble was to him the fatal *Cleopatra* for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it.

It will be thought strange, that, in enumerating the defects of this writer, I have not yet mentioned his neglect of the unities; his violation of those laws

which have been instituted and established by the joint authority of poets and criticks.

For his other deviations from the art of writing, I resign him to critical justice, without making any other demand in his favour, than that which must be indulged to all human excellence: that his virtues be rated with his failings: but from the censure which this irregularity may bring upon him, I shall, with due reverence to that learning which I must oppose, adventure to try how I can defend him.

His histories, being neither tragedies nor comedies, are not subject to any of their laws; nothing more is necessary to all the praise which they expect, than that the changes of action be so prepared as to be understood; that the incidents be various and affecting, and the characters consistent, natural, and distinct. No other unity is intended, and therefore none is to be sought.

In his other works he has well enough preserved the unity of action. He has not, indeed, an intrigue regularly perplexed and regularly unravelled: he does not endeavour to hide his design only to discover it, for this is seldom the order of real events, and Shakespeare is the poet of nature: but his plan has commonly, what Aristotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end; one event is concatenated with another, and the conclusion follows by easy consequence. There are perhaps some incidents that might be spared, as in other poets there is much talk that only fills up time upon the stage; but the general system makes gradual advances, and the end of the play is the end of expectation.

To the unities of time and place he has shewn no regard; and perhaps a nearer view of the principles on which they stand will diminish their value, and withdraw from them the veneration which, from the time of Corneille, they have very generally received, by discovering that they have given more trouble to the poet, than pleasure to the auditor.

The necessity of observing the unities of time and place arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The criticks hold it impossible that an action of months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three hours; or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre, while ambassadors go and return between distant kings, while armies are levied and towns besieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they saw courting his mistress, shall lament the untimely fall of his son. The mind revolts from evident falsehood, and fiction loses its force when it departs from the resemblance of reality.

From the narrow limitation of time neccssarily arises the contraction of place. The spectator, who knows that he saw the first act at Alexandria, cannot suppose that he sees the next at Rome, at a distance to which not the dragons of Medea could, in so short a time, have transported him; he knows with certainty that he has not changed his place; and he knows that place cannot change itself; that what was a house cannot become a plain; that what was Thebes can never be Persepolis.

Such is the triumphant language with which a critick exults over the misery of an irregular poet, and exults commonly without resistance or reply.

It is time, therefore, to tell him by the authority of Shakespeare, that he assumes, as an unquestionable principle, a position, which, while his breath is forming it into words, his understanding pronounces to be false. It is false, that any representation is mistaken for reality; that any dramatick fable in its materiality was ever credible, or, for a single moment, was ever credited.

The objection arising from the impossibility of passing the first hour at Alexandria, and the next at Rome, supposes, that when the play opens, the spectator really imagines himself at Alexandria, and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt, and that he lives in the days of Antony and Cleopatra. Surely he that imagines this may imagine more. He that can take the stage at one time for the palace of the Ptolemies, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Delusion, if delusion be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the spectator can be once persuaded, that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Cæsar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharsalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a state of elevation above the reach of reason, or of truth, and from the heights of empyrean poetry, may despise the circumscriptions of terrestrial nature. There is no reason why a mind thus wandering in ecstasy should count the clock, or why an hour should not be a century in that calenture of the brain that can make the stage a field.

The truth is, that the spectators are always in their senses, and know, from the first act to the last, the stage is only a stage, and that the players

are only players. They came to hear a certain number of lines recited with just gesture and elegant modulation. The lines relate to some action, and an action must be in some place; but the different actions that complete a story may be in places very remote from each other; and where is the absurdity of allowing that space to represent first Athens, and then Sicily, which was always known to be neither Sicily nor Athens, but a modern theatre?

By supposition, as place is introduced, time may be extended; the time required by the fable elapses for the most part between the acts; for, of so much of the action as is represented, the real and poetical duration is the same. If, in the first act, preparations for war against Mithridates are represented to be made in Rome, the event of the war may, without absurdity, be represented, in the catastrophe, as happening in Pontus; we know that there is neither war, nor preparation for war; we know that we are neither in Rome nor Pontus; that neither Mithridates nor Lucullus are before us. The drama exhibits successive imitations of successive actions; and why may not the second imitation represent an action that happened years after the first, if it be so connected with it, that nothing but time can be supposed to intervene? Time is, of all modes of existence, most obsequious to the imagination; a lapse of years is as easily conceived as a passage of hours. In contemplation we easily contract the time of real actions, and therefore willingly permit it to be contracted when we only see their imitation.

It will be asked, how the drama moves, if it is not credited. It is credited with all the credit due to a

drama. It is credited, whenever it moves, as a just picture of a real original; as representing to the auditor what he would himself feel, if he were to do or suffer what is there feigned to be suffered or to be done. The reflection that strikes the heart is not, that the evils before us are real evils, but that they are evils to which we ourselves may be exposed. If there be any fallacy, it is not that we fancy the players, but that we fancy ourselves unhappy for a moment; but we rather lament the possibility than suppose the presence of misery, as a mother weeps over her babe, when she remembers that death may take it from her. The delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction; if we thought murders and treasons real, they would please no more.

Imitations produce pain or pleasure, not because they are mistaken for realities, but because they bring realities to mind. When the imagination is recreated by a painted landscape, the trees are not supposed capable to give us shade, or the fountains coolness; but we consider how we should be pleased with such fountains playing beside us, and such woods waving over us. We are agitated in reading the history of Henry the Fifth, yet no man takes his book for the field of Agincourt. A dramatick exhibition is a book recited with concomitants that increase or diminish its effect. Familiar comedy is often more powerful on the theatre, than in the page; imperial tragedy is always less. The humour of Petruchio may be heightened by grimace; but what voice or what gesture can hope to add dignity or force to the soliloquy of Cato?

A play read affects the mind like a play acted. It is therefore evident, that the action is not supposed to be real; and it follows, that between the acts a longer or shorter time may be allowed to pass, and that no more account of space or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narrative, before whom may pass in an hour the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an empire.

Whether Shakespeare knew the unities, and rejected them by design, or deviated from them by happy ignorance, it is, I think, impossible to decide, and useless to enquire. We may reasonably suppose, that, when he rose to notice, he did not want the counsels and admonitions of scholars and criticks, and that he at last deliberately persisted in a practice, which he might have begun by chance. As nothing is essential to the fable but unity of action, and as the unities of time and place arise evidently from false assumptions, and, by circumscribing the extent of the drama, lessen its variety, I cannot think it much to be lamented, that they were not known by him, or not observed: nor, if such another poet could arise, should I very vehemently reproach him, that his first act passed at Venice, and his next in Cyprus. Such violations of rules merely positive become the comprehensive genius of Shakespeare, and such censures are suitable to the minute and slender criticism of Voltaire.

> Non usque adeo permiscuit imis
> Longus summa dies, ut non, si voce Metelli
> Serventur leges, malint à Cæsare tolli.

Yet when I speak thus slightly of dramatick rules,

I cannot but recollect how much wit and learning may be produced against me: before such authorities I am afraid to stand, not that I think the present question one of those that are to be decided by mere authority, but because it is to be suspected, that these precepts have not been so easily received, but for better reasons than I have yet been able to find. The result of my enquiries, in which it would be ludicrous to boast of impartiality, is, that the unities of time and place are not essential to a just drama; that though they may sometimes conduce to pleasure, they are always to be sacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and instruction; and that a play written with nice observation of critical rules, is to be contemplated as an elaborate curiosity, as the product of superfluous and ostentatious art, by which is shewn, rather what is possible, than what is necessary.

He that, without diminution of any other excellence, shall preserve all the unities unbroken, deserves the like applause with the architect, who shall display all the orders of architecture in a citadel, without any deduction from its strength: but the principal beauty of a citadel is to exclude the enemy; and the greatest graces of a play are to copy nature, and instruct life.

Perhaps, what I have here not dogmatically but deliberately written, may recall the principles of the drama to a new examination. I am almost frighted at my own temerity; and when I estimate the fame and the strength of those that maintain the contrary opinion, am ready to sink down in reverential silence; as Æneas withdrew from the defence of Troy, when he saw Neptune shaking the wall, and Juno heading the besiegers.

Those whom my arguments cannot persuade to give their approbation to the judgment of Shakespeare, will easily, if they consider the condition of his life, make some allowance for his ignorance.

Every man's performances, to be rightly estimated, must be compared with the state of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities; and though to the reader a book be not worse or better for the circumstances of the author, yet as there is always a silent reference of human works to human abilities, and as the enquiry, how far man may extend his designs, or how high he may rate his native force, is of far greater dignity than in what rank we shall place any particular performance, curiosity is always busy to discover the instruments, as well as to survey the workmanship, to know how much is to be ascribed to original powers, and how much to casual and adventitious help. The palaces of Peru or Mexico were certainly mean and incommodious habitations, if compared to the houses of European monarchs; yet who could forbear to view them with astonishment, who remembered that they were built without the use of iron?

The English nation, in the time of Shakespeare, was yet struggling to emerge from barbarity. The philology of Italy had been transplanted hither in the reign of Henry the Eighth; and the learned languages had been successfully cultivated by Lilly, Linacre, and More; by Pole, Cheke, and Gardiner; and afterwards by Smith, Clerk, Haddon, and Ascham. Greek was now taught to boys in the principal schools; and those who united elegance with learning, read, with great diligence, the Italian and

Spanish poets. But literature was yet confined to professed scholars, or to men and women of high rank. The publick was gross and dark; and to be able to read and write, was an accomplishment still valued for its rarity.

Nations, like individuals, have their infancy. A people newly awakened to literary curiosity, being yet unacquainted with the true state of things, knows not how to judge of that which is proposed as its resemblance. Whatever is remote from common appearances is always welcome to vulgar, as to childish credulity; and of a country unenlightened by learning, the whole people is the vulgar. The study of those who then aspired to plebeian learning was laid out upon adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments. "The Death of Arthur" was the favourite volume.

The mind which has feasted on the luxurious wonders of fiction, has no taste of the insipidity of truth. A play which imitated only the common occurrences of the world, would, upon the admirers of "Palmerin" and "Guy of Warwick" have made little impression; he that wrote for such an audience was under the necessity of looking round for strange events and fabulous transactions; and that incredibility, by which maturer knowledge is offended, was the chief recommendation of writings, to unskilful curiosity.

Our author's plots are generally borrowed from novels; and it is reasonable to suppose, that he chose the most popular, such as were read by many, and related by more; for his audience could not have followed him through the intricacies of

the drama, had they not held the thread of the story in their hands.

The stories, which we now find only in remoter authors, were in his time accessible and familiar. The fable of "As you like it," which is supposed to be copied from Chaucer's "Gamelyn," was a little pamphlet of those times; and old Mr. Cibber remembered the tale of "Hamlet" in plain English prose, which the criticks have now to seek in Saxo Grammaticus.

His English histories he took from English chronicles and English ballads; and as the ancient writers were made known to his countrymen by versions, they supplied him with new subjects; he dilated some of Plutarch's lives into plays, when they had been translated by North.

His plots, whether historical or fabulous, are always crowded with incidents, by which the attention of a rude people was more easily caught than by sentiment or argumentation; and such is the power of the marvellous, even over those who despise it, that every man finds his mind more strongly seized by the tragedies of Shakespeare than of any other writer: others please us by particular speeches; but he always makes us anxious for the event, and has perhaps excelled all but Homer in securing the first purpose of a writer, by exciting restless and unquenchable curiosity, and compelling him that reads his work to read it through.

The shows and bustle with which his plays abound have the same original. As knowledge advances, pleasure passes from the eye to the ear, but returns, as it declines, from the ear to the eye. Those to

whom our author's labours were exhibited had more skill in pomps or processions than in poetical language, and perhaps wanted some visible and discriminated events, as comments on the dialogue. He knew how he should most please; and whether his practice is more agreeable to nature, or whether his example has prejudiced the nation, we still find that on our stage something must be done as well as said, and inactive declamation is very coldly heard, however musical or elegant, passionate or sublime.

Voltaire expresses his wonder, that our author's extravagancies are endured by a nation which has seen the tragedy of "Cato." Let him be answered, that Addison speaks the language of poets; and Shakespeare, of men. We find in "Cato" innumerable beauties which enamour us of its author, but we see nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments or human actions; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but "Othello" is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation impregnated by genius. "Cato" affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated, and harmonious, but its hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart; the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of Cato, but we think on Addison.

The work of a correct and regular writer is a garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with shades, and scented with flowers; the composition of Shakespeare is a forest, in which oaks extend their branches, and pines tower in the

air, interspersed sometimes with weeds and brambles, and sometimes giving shelter to myrtles and to roses; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endless diversity. Other poets display cabinets of precious rarities, minutely finished, wrought into shape, and polished into brightness. Shakespeare opens a mine which contains gold and diamonds in unexhaustible plenty, though clouded by incrustations, debased by impurities, and mingled with a mass of meaner minerals.

It has been much disputed, whether Shakespeare owed his excellence to his own native force, or whether he had the common helps of scholastick education, the precepts of critical science, and the examples of ancient authors.

There has always prevailed a tradition, that Shakespeare wanted learning, that he had no regular education, nor much skill in the dead languages. Jonson, his friend, affirms, that *he had small Latin, and less Greek;* who, besides that he had no imaginable temptation to falsehood, wrote at a time when the character and acquisitions of Shakespeare were known to multitudes. His evidence ought therefore to decide the controversy, unless some testimony of equal force could be opposed.

Some have imagined, that they have discovered deep learning in many imitations of old writers; but the examples which I have known urged were drawn from books translated in his time; or were such easy coincidences of thought, as will happen to all who consider the same subjects; or such remarks on life or axioms of morality as float in conversation, and are transmitted through the world in proverbial sentences.

I have found it remarked, that, in this important sentence, *Go before, I'll follow*, we read a translation of, *I præ, sequar.* I have been told, that when Caliban, after a pleasing dream, says, *I cry'd to sleep again*, the author imitates Anacreon, who had, like every other man, the same wish on the same occasion.

There are a few passages which may pass for imitations, but so few, that the exception only confirms the rule; he obtained them from accidental quotations, or by oral communication, and as he used what he had, would have used more if he had obtained it.

The "Comedy of Errors" is confessedly taken from the *Menœchmi* of Plautus; from the only play of Plautus which was then in English. What can be more probable, than that he who copied that would have copied more; but that those which were not translated were inaccessible?

Whether he knew the modern languages is uncertain. That his plays have some French scenes proves but little; he might easily procure them to be written, and probably, even though he had known the language in the common degree, he could not have written it without assistance. In the story of "Romeo and Juliet" he is observed to have followed the English translation, where it deviates from the Italian: but this on the other part proves nothing against his knowledge of the original. He was to copy, not what he knew himself, but what was known to his audience.

It is most likely that he had learned Latin sufficiently to make him acquainted with construction,

but that he never advanced to an easy perusal of the Roman authors. Concerning his skill in modern languages, I can find no sufficient ground of determination; but as no imitations of French or Italian authors have been discovered, though the Italian poetry was then high in esteem, I am inclined to believe, that he read little more than English, and chose for his fables only such tales as he found translated.

That much knowledge is scattered over his works is very justly observed by Pope; but it is often such knowledge as books did not supply. He that will understand Shakespeare, must not be content to study him in the closet; he must look for his meaning sometimes among the sports of the field, and sometimes among the manufactures of the shop.

There is, however, proof enough that he was a very diligent reader; nor was our language then so indigent of books, but that he might very liberally indulge his curiosity without excursion into foreign literature. Many of the Roman authors were translated, and some of the Greek; the Reformation had filled the kingdom with theological learning; most of the topicks of human disquisition had found English writers; and poetry had been cultivated, not only with diligence, but success. This was a stock of knowledge sufficient for a mind so capable of appropriating and improving it.

But the greater part of his excellence was the product of his own genius. He found the English stage in a state of the utmost rudeness; no essays either in tragedy or comedy had appeared, from which it could be discovered to what degree of delight either

one or other might be carried. Neither character nor dialogue were yet understood. Shakespeare may be truly said to have introduced them both amongst us, and in some of his happier scenes to have carried them both to the utmost height.

By what gradations of improvement he proceeded, is not easily known; for the chronology of his works is yet unsettled. Rowe is of opinion, that "perhaps we are not to look for his beginning, like those of other writers, in his least perfect works; art had so little, and nature so large a share in what he did, that for aught I know," says he, "the performances of his youth, as they were the most vigorous, were the best." But the power of nature is only the power of using to any certain purpose the materials which diligence procures, or opportunity supplies. Nature gives no man knowledge, and when images are collected by study and experience, can only assist in combining or applying them. Shakespeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned; and as he must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition, he, like them, grew wiser as he grew older, could display life better, as he knew it more, and instruct with more efficacy, as he was himself more amply instructed.

There is a vigilance of observation and accuracy of distinction which books and precepts cannot confer; from this almost all original and native excellence proceeds. Shakespeare must have looked upon mankind with perspicacity, in the highest degree curious and attentive. Other writers borrow their characters from preceding writers, and diversify

them only by the accidental appendages of present manners; the dress is a little varied, but the body is the same. Our author had both matter and form to provide; for, except the characters of Chaucer, to whom I think he is not much indebted, there were no writers in English, and perhaps not many in other modern languages, which shewed life in its native colours.

The contest about the original benevolence or malignity of man had not yet commenced. Speculation had not yet attempted to analyse the mind, to trace the passions to their sources, to unfold the seminal principles of vice and virtue, or sound the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All those enquiries, which from that time that human nature became the fashionable study, have been made sometimes with nice discernment, but often with idle subtilty, were yet unattempted. The tales, with which the infancy of learning was satisfied, exhibited only the superficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the causes, and were formed for such as delighted in wonders rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be studied in the closet; he that would know the world, was under the necessity of gleaning his own remarks, by mingling as he could in its business and amusements.

Boyle congratulated himself upon his high birth, because it favoured his curiosity, by facilitating his access. Shakespeare had no such advantage: he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments. Many works of genius and learning have been performed in

states of life that appear very little favourable to thought or to enquiry; so many, that he who considers them is inclined to think that he sees enterprize and perseverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vanish before them. The genius of Shakespeare was not to be depressed by the weight of poverty, nor limited by the narrow conversation to which men in want are inevitably condemned; the incumbrances of his fortune were shaken from his mind, *as dew drops from a lion's mane.*

Though he had so many difficulties to encounter, and so little assistance to surmount them, he has been able to obtain an exact knowledge of many modes of life, and many casts of native dispositions; to vary them with great multiplicity; to mark them by nice distinctions; and to shew them in full view by proper combinations. In this part of his performances he had none to imitate, but has been himself imitated by all succeeding writers; and it may be doubted, whether from all his successors more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence, can be collected, than he alone has given to his country.

Nor was his attention confined to the actions of men; he was an exact surveyor of the inanimate world; his descriptions have always some peculiarities, gathered by contemplating things as they really exist. It may be observed that the oldest poets of many nations preserve their reputation, and that the following generations of wit, after a short celebrity, sink into oblivion. The first, whoever they be, must take their sentiments and descriptions

immediately from knowledge; the resemblance is therefore just, their descriptions are verified by every eye, and their sentiments acknowledged by every breast. Those whom their fame invites to the same studies, copy partly them, and partly nature, till the books of one age gain such authority, as to stand in the place of nature to another, and imitation, always deviating a little, becomes at last capricious and casual. Shakespeare, whether life or nature be his subject, shews plainly that he has seen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or distorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his representations to be just, and the learned see that they are complete.

Perhaps it would not be easy to find any author, except Homer, who invented so much as Shakespeare, who so much advanced the studies which he cultivated, or effused so much novelty upon his age or country. The form, the characters, the language, and the shows of the English drama are his. "He seems," says Dennis, "to have been the very original of our English tragical harmony, that is, the harmony of blank verse, diversified often by dissyllable and trissyllable terminations. For the diversity distinguishes it from heroick harmony, and by bringing it nearer to common use makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verse we make when we are writing prose; we make such verse in common conversation."

I know not whether this praise is rigorously just. The dissyllable termination, which the critick rightly appropriates to the drama, is to be found

though, I think, not in "Gorboduc," which is confessedly before our author; yet in "Hieronymo*," of which the date is not certain, but which there is reason to believe at least as old as his earliest plays. This however is certain, that he is the first who taught either tragedy or comedy to please, there being no theatrical piece of any older writer, of which the name is known, except to antiquaries and collectors of books, which are sought because they are scarce, and would not have been scarce, had they been much esteemed.

To him we must ascribe the praise, unless Spenser may divide it with him, of having first discovered to how much smoothness and harmony the English language could be softened. He has speeches, perhaps sometimes scenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours indeed commonly to strike by the force and vigour of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpose better, than when he tries to soothe by softness.

Yet it must be at last confessed, that as we owe every thing to him, he owes something to us; that, if much of his praise is paid by perception and judgment, much is likewise given by custom and veneration. We fix our eyes upon his graces, and turn them from his deformities, and endure in him what we should in another loath or despise. If we endured without praising, respect for the father of our drama might excuse us; but I have seen, in the book of some modern critick, a collection of anomalies, which shew that he has corrupted language

* It appears, from the induction of Ben Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair," to have been acted before the year 1590. STEEVENS.

by every mode of depravation, but which his admirer has accumulated as a monument of honour.

He has scenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence; but perhaps not one play, which, if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer, would be heard to the conclusion. I am indeed far from thinking, that his works were wrought to his own ideas of perfection; when they were such as would satisfy the audience, they satisfied the writer. It is seldom that authors, though more studious of fame than Shakespeare, rise much above the standard of their own age; to add a little to what is best will always be sufficient for present praise, and those who find themselves exalted into fame, are willing to credit their encomiasts, and to spare the labour of contending with themselves.

It does not appear, that Shakespeare thought his works worthy of posterity, that he levied any ideal tribute upon future times, or had any further prospect, than of present popularity and present profit. When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end; he solicited no addition of honour from the reader. He therefore made no scruple to repeat the same jests in many dialogues, or to entangle different plots by the same knot of perplexity; which may be at least forgiven him, by those who recollect, that of Congreve's four comedies, two are concluded by a marriage in a mask, by a deception, which perhaps never happened, and which, whether likely or not, he did not invent.

So careless was this great poet of future fame, that, though he retired to ease and plenty, while he was yet little *declined into the vale of years*, before

he could be disgusted with fatigue, or disabled by infirmity, he made no collection of his works, nor desired to rescue those that had been already published from the depravations that obscured them, or secure to the rest a better destiny, by giving them to the world in their genuine state.

Of the plays which bear the name of Shakespeare in the late editions, the greater part were not published till about seven years after his death; and the few which appeared in his life are apparently thrust into the world without the care of the author, and therefore probably without his knowledge.

Of all the publishers, clandestine or professed, the negligence and unskilfulness has by the late revisers been sufficiently shewn. The faults of all are indeed numerous and gross, and have not only corrupted many passages perhaps beyond recovery, but have brought others into suspicion, which are only obscured by obsolete phraseology, or by the writer's unskilfulness and affectation. To alter is more easy than to explain, and temerity is a more common quality than diligence. Those who saw that they must employ conjecture to a certain degree, were willing to indulge it a little further. Had the author published his own works, we should have sat quietly down to disentangle his intricacies, and clear his obscurities; but now we tear what we cannot loose, and eject what we happen not to understand.

The faults are more than could have happened without the concurrence of many causes. The style of Shakespeare was in itself ungrammatical, perplexed, and obscure; his works were transcribed for the players by those who may be supposed to have

seldom understood them; they were transmitted by copiers equally unskilful, who still multiplied errors; they were perhaps sometimes mutilated by the actors, for the sake of shortening the speeches; and were at last printed without correction of the press.

In this state they remained, not as Dr. Warburton supposes, because they were unregarded, but because the editor's art was not yet applied to modern languages, and our ancestors were accustomed to so much negligence of English printers, that they could very patiently endure it. At last an edition was undertaken by Rowe; not because a poet was to be published by a poet, for Rowe seems to have thought very little on correction or explanation; but that our author's works might appear like those of his fraternity, with the appendages of a life and recommendatory preface. Rowe has been clamorously blamed for not performing what he did not undertake; and it is time that justice be done him, by confessing that though he seems to have had no thought of corruption beyond the printer's errors, yet he has made many emendations, if they were not made before, which his successors have received without acknowledgment, and which, if they had produced them, would have filled pages and pages with censures of the stupidity by which the faults were committed, with displays of the absurdities which they involved, with ostentatious exposition of the new reading, and self-congratulations on the happiness of discovering.

As of the other editors I have preserved the prefaces, I have likewise borrowed the author's life from Rowe, though not written with much elegance or

spirit; it relates, however, what is now to be known, and therefore deserves to pass through all succeeding publications.

The nation had been for many years content enough with Mr. Rowe's performance, when Mr. Pope made them acquainted with the true state of Shakespeare's text, shewed that it was extremely corrupt, and gave reason to hope that there were means of reforming it. He collated the old copies, which none had thought to examine before, and restored many lines to their integrity; but, by a very compendious criticism, he rejected whatever he disliked, and thought more of amputation than of cure.

I know not why he is commended by Dr. Warburton for distinguishing the genuine from the spurious plays. In this choice he exerted no judgment of his own; the plays which he received, were given by Hemings and Condel, the first editors; and those which he rejected, though, according to the licentiousness of the press in those times, they were printed during Shakespeare's life, with his name, had been omitted by his friends, and were never added to his works before the edition of 1664, from which they were copied by the later printers.

This is a work which Pope seems to have thought unworthy of his abilities, being not able to suppress his contempt of *the dull duty of an editor*. He understood but half his undertaking. The duty of a collator is indeed dull, yet, like other tedious tasks, is very necessary; but an emendatory critick would ill discharge his duty, without qualities very different from dulness. In perusing a corrupted piece, he must have before him all possibilities of

meaning, with all possibilities of expression. Such must be his comprehension of thought, and such his copiousness of language. Out of many readings possible, he must be able to select that which best suits with the state, opinions, and modes of language prevailing in every age, and with his author's particular cast of thought, and turn of expression. Such must be his knowledge, and such his taste. Conjectural criticism demands more than humanity possesses, and he that exercises it with most praise, has very frequent need of indulgence. Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor.

Confidence is the common consequence of success. They whose excellence of any kind has been loudly celebrated, are ready to conclude, that their powers are universal. Pope's edition fell below his own expectations, and he was so much offended when he was found to have left any thing for others to do, that he passed the latter part of his life in a state of hostility with verbal criticism.

I have retained all his notes, that no fragment of so great a writer may be lost; his preface, valuable alike for elegance of composition and justness of remark, and containing a general criticism on his author, so extensive that little can be added, and so exact that little can be disputed, every editor has an interest to suppress, but that every reader would demand its insertion.

Pope was succeeded by Theobald, a man of narrow comprehension, and small acquisitions, with no native and intrinsic splendor of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning, but zealous for minute accuracy, and not negligent in pursuing it. He

collated the ancient copies, and rectified many errors. A man so anxiously scrupulous might have been expected to do more, but what little he did was commonly right.

In his reports of copies and editions he is not to be trusted without examination. He speaks sometimes indefinitely of copies, when he has only one. In his enumeration of editions, he mentions the two first folios as of high, and the third folio as of middle authority; but the truth is, that the first is equivalent to all others, and that the rest only deviate from it by the printer's negligence. Whoever has any of the folios has all, excepting those diversities which mere reiteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards used only the first.

Of his notes I have generally retained those which he retained himself in his second edition, except when they were confuted by subsequent annotators, or were too minute to merit preservation. I have sometimes adopted his restoration of a comma, without inserting the panegyrick in which he celebrated himself for his atchievement. The exuberant excrescence of his diction I have often lopped, his triumphant exultations over Pope and Rowe I have sometimes suppressed, and his contemptible ostentation I have frequently concealed; but I have in some places shewn him, as he would have shewn himself, for the reader's diversion, that the inflated emptiness of some notes may justify or excuse the contraction of the rest.

Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus mean and faithless, thus petulant and ostentatious, by the good

luck of having Pope for his enemy, has escaped, and escaped alone, with reputation, from this undertaking. So willingly does the world support those who solicit favour, against those who command reverence; and so easily is he praised, whom no man can envy.

Our author fell then into the hands of Sir Thomas Hanmer, the Oxford editor, a man, in my opinion, eminently qualified by nature for such studies. He had, what is the first requisite to emendatory criticism, that intuition by which the poet's intention is immediately discovered, and that dexterity of intellect which dispatches its work by the easiest means. He had undoubtedly read much; his acquaintance with customs, opinions, and traditions, seems to have been large; and he is often learned without shew. He seldom passes what he does not understand, without an attempt to find or to make a meaning, and sometimes hastily makes what a little more attention would have found. He is solicitous to reduce to grammar what he could not be sure that his author intended to be grammatical. Shakespeare regarded more the series of ideas, than of words; and his language, not being designed for the reader's desk, was all that he desired it to be, if it conveyed his meaning to the audience.

Hanmer's care of the metre has been too violently censured. He found the measure reformed in so many passages by the silent labours of some editors, with the silent acquiescence of the rest, that he thought himself allowed to extend a little further the licence, which had already been carried so far without reprehension; and of his corrections in

general, it must be confessed, that they are often just, and made commonly with the least possible violation of the text.

But, by inserting his emendations, whether invented or borrowed, into the page, without any notice of varying copies, he has appropriated the labour of his predecessors, and made his own edition of little authority. His confidence indeed, both in himself and others, was too great; he supposes all to be right that was done by Pope and Theobald; he seems not to suspect a critick of fallibility; and it was but reasonable that he should claim what he so liberally granted.

As he never writes without careful enquiry and diligent consideration, I have received all his notes, and believe that every reader will wish for more.

Of the last editor it is more difficult to speak. Respect is due to high place, tenderness to living reputation, and veneration to genius and learning; but he cannot be justly offended at that liberty of which he has himself so frequently given an example, nor very solicitous what is thought of notes, which he ought never to have considered as part of his serious employments, and which, I suppose, since the ardour of composition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effusions.

The original and predominant error of his commentary, is acquiescence in his first thoughts; that precipitation which is produced by consciousness of quick discernment; and that confidence which presumes to do, by surveying the surface, what labour only can perform, by penetrating the bottom. His notes exhibit sometimes perverse interpreta-

tions, and sometimes improbable conjectures; he at one time gives the author more profundity of meaning than the sentence admits, and at another discovers absurdities, where the sense is plain to every other reader. But his emendations are likewise often happy and just; and his interpretation of obscure passages learned and sagacious.

Of his notes, I have commonly rejected those against which the general voice of the publick has exclaimed, or which their own incongruity immediately condemns, and which, I suppose, the author himself would desire to be forgotten. Of the rest, to part I have given the highest approbation, by inserting the offered reading in the text; part I have left to the judgment of the reader, as doubtful, though specious; and part I have censured without reserve, but I am sure without bitterness of malice, and, I hope, without wantonness of insult.

It is no pleasure to me, in revising my volumes, to observe how much paper is wasted in confutation. Whoever considers the revolutions of learning, and the various questions of greater or less importance, upon which wit and reason have exercised their powers, must lament the unsuccessfulness of enquiry, and the slow advances of truth, when he reflects that great part of the labour of every writer is only the destruction of those that went before him. The first care of the builder of a new system, is to demolish the fabricks which are standing. The chief desire of him that comments an author, is to shew how much other commentators have corrupted and obscured him. The opinions prevalent in one age, as truths above the reach of controversy,

are confuted and rejected in another, and rise again to reception in remoter times. Thus the human mind is kept in motion without progress. Thus sometimes truth and error, and sometimes contrarieties of error, take each other's place by reciprocal invasion. The tide of seeming knowledge, which is poured over one generation, retires and leaves another naked and barren; the sudden meteors of intelligence, which for awhile appear to shoot their beams into the regions of obscurity, on a sudden withdraw their lustre, and leave mortals again to grope their way.

These elevations and depressions of renown, and the contradictions to which all improvers of knowledge must for ever be exposed, since they are not escaped by the highest and brightest of mankind, may surely be endured with patience by criticks and annotators, who can rank themselves but as the satellites of their authors. How canst thou beg for life, says Homer's hero to his captive, when thou knowest that thou art now to suffer only what must another day be suffered by Achilles?

Dr. Warburton had a name sufficient to confer celebrity to those who could exalt themselves into antagonists, and his notes have raised a clamour too loud to be distinct. His chief assailants are the authors of "The Canons of Criticism," and of "The Revisal of Shakespeare's text;" of whom one ridicules his errors with airy petulance, suitable enough to the levity of the controversy; the other attacks them with gloomy malignity, as if he were dragging to justice an assassin or incendiary. The

one stings like a fly, sucks a little blood, takes a gay flutter, and returns for more; the other bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammations and gangrene behind him. When I think on one, with his confederates, I remember the danger of Coriolanus, who was afraid that *girls with spits, and boys with stones, should slay him in puny battle;* when the other crosses my imagination, I remember the prodigy in Macbeth:

> A falcon tow'ring in his pride of place,
> Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Let me however do them justice. One is a wit, and one a scholar*. They have both shewn acuteness sufficient in the discovery of faults, and have both advanced some probable interpretations of obscure passages; but when they aspire to conjecture and emendation, it appears how falsely we all estimate our own abilities, and the little which they have been able to perform might have taught them more candour to the endeavours of others.

Before Dr. Warburton's edition, "Critical Observations on Shakespeare" had been published by Mr. Upton†, a man skilled in languages, and acquainted with books, but who seems to have had no great

* It is extraordinary that this gentleman should attempt so voluminous a work, as the Revisal of Shakespeare's text, when he tells us in his preface, "he was not so fortunate as to be furnished with either of the folio editions, much less any of the ancient quartos: and even Sir Thomas Hanmer's performance was known to him only by Dr. Warburton's representation." FARMER.

† Republished by him in 1748, after Dr. Warburton's edition, with alterations, &c. STEEVENS.

vigour of genius, or nicety of taste. Many of his explanations are curious and useful, but he likewise, though he professed to oppose the licentious confidence of editors, and adhere to the old copies, is unable to restrain the rage of emendation, though his ardour is ill seconded by his skill. Every cold empirick, when his heart is expanded by a successful experiment, swells into a theorist, and the laborious collator at some unlucky moment frolicks in conjecture.

"Critical, historical, and explanatory Notes" have been likewise published upon Shakespeare by Dr. Grey, whose diligent perusal of the old English writers has enabled him to make some useful observations. What he undertook he has well enough performed; but as he neither attempts judicial or emendatory criticism, he employs rather his memory than his sagacity. It were to be wished that all would endeavour to imitate his modesty, who have not been able to surpass his knowledge.

I can say with great sincerity of all my predecessors, what I hope will hereafter be said of me, that not one has left Shakespeare without improvement; nor is there one to whom I have not been indebted for assistance and information. Whatever I have taken from them, it was my intention to refer to its original author, and it is certain, that what I have not given to another, I believed when I wrote it to be my own. In some perhaps I have been anticipated; but if I am ever found to encroach upon the remarks of any other commentator, I am willing that the honour, be it more or less, should be transferred to the first claimant, for his right, and his alone, stands

above dispute; the second can prove his pretensions only to himself, nor can himself always distinguish invention, with sufficient certainty, from recollection.

They have all been treated by me with candour, which they have not been careful of observing to one another. It is not easy to discover from what cause the acrimony of a scholiast can naturally proceed. The subjects to be discussed by him are of very small importance; they involve neither property nor liberty; nor favour the interest of sect or party. The various readings of copies, and different interpretations of a passage, seem to be questions that might exercise the wit, without engaging the passions. But whether it be that *small things make mean men proud*, and vanity catches small occasions; or that all contrariety of opinion, even in those that can defend it no longer, makes proud men angry; there is often found in commentators a spontaneous strain of invective and contempt, more eager and venomous than is vented by the most furious controvertist in politicks against those whom he is hired to defame.

Perhaps the lightness of the matter may conduce to the vehemence of the agency; when the truth to be investigated is so near to inexistence, as to escape attention, its bulk is to be enlarged by rage and exclamation: that to which all would be indifferent in its original state, may attract notice when the fate of a name is appended to it. A commentator has indeed great temptations to supply by turbulence what he wants of dignity, to beat his little gold to a spacious surface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to spirit.

The notes which I have borrowed or written are either illustrative, by which difficulties are explained; or judicial, by which faults and beauties are remarked; or emendatory, by which depravations are corrected.

The explanations transcribed from others, if I do not subjoin any other interpretation, I suppose commonly to be right, at least I intend by acquiescence to confess, that I have nothing better to propose.

After the labours of all the editors I found many passages which appeared to me likely to obstruct the greater number of readers, and thought it my duty to facilitate their passage. It is impossible for an expositor not to write too little for some, and too much for others. He can only judge what is necessary by his own experience; and how long soever he may deliberate, will at last explain many lines which the learned will think impossible to be mistaken, and omit many for which the ignorant will want his help. These are censures merely relative, and must be quietly endured. I have endeavoured to be neither superfluously copious, nor scrupulously reserved, and hope that I have made my author's meaning accessible to many, who before were frighted from perusing him, and contributed something to the publick, by diffusing innocent and rational pleasure.

The complete explanation of an author not systematick and consequential, but desultory and vagrant, abounding in casual allusions and light hints, is not to be expected from any single scholiast. All personal reflections, when names are suppressed, must be in a few years irrecoverably obliterated; and cus-

toms, too minute to attract the notice of law, such as modes of dress, formalities of conversation, rules of visits, disposition of furniture, and practices of ceremony, which naturally find places in familiar dialogue, are so fugitive and unsubstantial, that they are not easily retained or recovered. What can be known will be collected by chance, from the recesses of obscure and obsolete papers, perused commonly with some other view. Of this knowledge every man has some, and none has much; but when an author has engaged the publick attention, those who can add any thing to his illustration, communicate their discoveries, and time produces what had eluded diligence.

To time I have been obliged to resign many passages, which, though I did not understand them, will perhaps hereafter be explained; having, I hope, illustrated some, which others have neglected or mistaken, sometimes by short remarks, or marginal directions, such as every editor has added at his will, and often by comments more laborious than the matter will seem to deserve; but that which is most difficult is not always most important, and to an editor nothing is a trifle by which his author is obscured.

The poetical beauties or defects I have not been very diligent to observe. Some plays have more, and some fewer judicial observations, not in proportion to their difference of merit, but because I gave this part of my design to chance and to caprice. The reader, I believe, is seldom pleased to find his opinion anticipated; it is natural to delight more in what we find or make, than in what we receive.

Judgment, like other faculties, is improved by practice, and its advancement is hindered by submission to dictatorial decisions, as the memory grows torpid by the use of a table-book. Some initiation is however necessary; of all skill, part is infused by precept, and part is obtained by habit; I have therefore shewn so much as may enable the candidate for criticism to discover the rest.

To the end of most plays I have added short strictures, containing a general censure of faults, or praise of excellence; in which I know not how much I have concurred with the current opinion; but I have not, by any affectation of singularity, deviated from it. Nothing is minutely and particularly examined, and therefore it is to be supposed, that in the plays which are condemned there is much to be praised, and in those which are praised much to be condemned.

The part of criticism in which the whole succession of editors has laboured with the greatest diligence, which has occasioned the most arrogant ostentation, and excited the keenest acrimony, is the emendation of corrupted passages, to which the publick attention having been first drawn by the violence of the contention between Pope and Theobald, has been continued by the persecution, which, with a kind of conspiracy, has been since raised against all the publishers of Shakespeare.

That many passages have passed in a state of depravation through all the editions, is indubitably certain; of these the restoration is only to be attempted by collation of copies, or sagacity of conjecture. The collator's province is safe and easy

the conjecturer's perilous and difficult. Yet as the greater part of the plays are extant only in one copy, the peril must not be avoided, nor the difficulty refused.

Of the readings which this emulation of amendment has hitherto produced, some from the labours of every publisher I have advanced into the text; those are to be considered as in my opinion sufficiently supported; some I have rejected without mention, as evidently erroneous; some I have left in the notes without censure or approbation, as resting in equipoise between objection and defence; and some, which seemed specious but not right, I have inserted with a subsequent animadversion.

Having classed the observations of others, I was at last to try what I could substitute for their mistakes, and how I could supply their omissions. I collated such copies as I could procure, and wished for more, but have not found the collectors of these rarities very communicative. Of the editions which chance or kindness put into my hands I have given an enumeration, that I may not be blamed for neglecting what I had not the power to do.

By examining the old copies, I soon found that the later publishers, with all their boasts of diligence, suffered many passages to stand unauthorised, and contented themselves with Rowe's regulation of the text, even where they knew it to be arbitrary, and with a little consideration might have found it to be wrong. Some of these alterations are only the ejection of a word for one that appeared to him more elegant or more intelligible. These corruptions I have often silently rectified; for the history of our

language, and the true force of our words, can only be preserved, by keeping the text of authors free from adulteration. Others, and those very frequent, smoothed the cadence, or regulated the measure: on these I have not exercised the same rigour; if only a word was transposed, or a particle inserted or omitted, I have sometimes suffered the line to stand; for the inconstancy of the copies is such, as that some liberties may be easily permitted. But this practice I have not suffered to proceed far, having restored the primitive diction wherever it could for any reason be preferred.

The emendations, which comparison of copies supplied, I have inserted in the text: sometimes, where the improvement was slight, without notice, and sometimes with an account of the reasons of the change.

Conjecture, though it be sometimes unavoidable, I have not wantonly nor licentiously indulged. It has been my settled principle, that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and therefore is not to be disturbed for the sake of elegance, perspicuity, or mere improvement of the sense. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the first publishers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right, than we who read it only by imagination. But it is evident that they have often made strange mistakes by ignorance or negligence, and that therefore something may be properly attempted by criticism, keeping the middle way between presumption and timidity.

Such criticism I have attempted to practise, and where any passage appeared inextricably perplexed

have endeavoured to discover how it may be recalled to sense, with least violence. But my first labour is, always to turn the old text on every side, and try if there be any interstice, through which light can find its way; nor would Huetius himself condemn me, as refusing the trouble of research, for the ambition of alteration. In this modest industry I have not been unsuccessful. I have rescued many lines from the violations of temerity, and secured many scenes from the inroads of correction. I have adopted the Roman sentiment, that it is more honourable to save a citizen, than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to attack.

I have preserved the common distribution of the plays into acts, though I believe it to be in almost all the plays void of authority. Some of those which are divided in the later editions have no division in the first folio, and some that are divided in the folio have no division in the preceding copies. The settled mode of the theatre requires four intervals in the play; but few, if any, of our author's compositions can be properly distributed in that manner. An act is so much of the drama as passes without intervention of time, or change of place. A pause makes a new act. In every real, and therefore in every imitative action, the intervals may be more or fewer, the restriction of five acts being accidental and arbitrary. This Shakespeare knew, and this he practised; his plays were written, and at first printed in one unbroken continuity, and ought now to be exhibited with short pauses, interposed as often as the scene is changed, or any considerable time is required to pass. This method would at once quell a thousand absurdities.

In restoring the author's works to their integrity, I have considered the punctuation as wholly in my power; for what could be their care of colons and commas, who corrupted words and sentences? Whatever could be done by adjusting points, is therefore silently performed, in some plays with much diligence, in others with less; it is hard to keep a busy eye steadily fixed upon evanescent atoms, or a discursive mind upon evanescent truth.

The same liberty has been taken with a few particles, or other words of slight effect. I have sometimes inserted or omitted them without notice. I have done that sometimes, which the other editors have done always, and which indeed the state of the text may sufficiently justify.

The greater part of readers, instead of blaming us for passing trifles, will wonder that on mere trifles so much labour is expended, with such importance of debate, and such solemnity of diction. To these I answer with confidence, that they are judging of an art which they do not understand; yet cannot much reproach them with their ignorance, nor promise that they would become in general, by learning criticism, more useful, happier, or wiser.

As I practised conjecture more, I learned to trust it less; and after I had printed a few plays, resolved to insert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate myself, for every day encreases my doubt of my emendations.

Since I have confined my imagination to the margin, it must not be considered as very reprehensible, if I have suffered it to play some freaks in its own dominion. There is no danger in conjecture, if it be

proposed as conjecture; and while the text remains uninjured, those changes may be safely offered, which are not considered even by him that offers them as necessary or safe.

If my readings are of little value, they have not been ostentatiously displayed or importunately obtruded. I could have written longer notes, for the art of writing notes is not of difficult attainment. The work is performed, first by railing at the stupidity, negligence, ignorance, and asinine tastelessness of the former editors, and shewing, from all that goes before and all that follows, the inelegance and absurdity of the old reading; then by proposing something, which to superficial readers would seem specious, but which the editor rejects with indignation; then by producing the true reading, with a long paraphrase, and concluding with loud acclamations on the discovery, and a sober wish for the advancement and prosperity of genuine criticism.

All this may be done, and perhaps done some times without impropriety. But I have always suspected that the reading is right, which requires many words to prove it wrong; and the emendation wrong, that cannot without so much labour appear to be right. The justness of a happy restoration strikes at once, and the moral precept may be well applied to criticism, *quod dubitas ne feceris.*

To dread the shore which he sees spread with wrecks, is natural to the sailor. I had before my eye so many critical adventures ended in miscarriage, that caution was forced upon me. I encountered in every page wit struggling with its own sophistry, and

learning confused by the multiplicity of its views. I was forced to censure those whom I admired, and could not but reflect, while I was dispossessing their emendations, how soon the same fate might happen to my own, and how many of the readings which I have corrected may be by some other editor defended and established.

> Criticks I saw, that others' names efface,
> And fix their own, with labour, in the place;
> Their own, like others, soon their place resign'd,
> Or disappear'd, and left the first behind. POPE.

That a conjectural critick should often be mistaken, cannot be wonderful, either to others or himself, if it be considered, that in his art there is no system, no principal and axiomatical truth that regulates subordinate positions. His chance of error is renewed at every attempt; an oblique view of the passage, a slight misapprehension of a phrase, a casual inattention to the parts connected, is sufficient to make him not only fail, but fail ridiculously; and when he succeeds best, he produces perhaps but one reading of many probable, and he that suggests another will always be able to dispute his claims.

It is an unhappy state, in which danger is hid under pleasure. The allurements of emendation are scarcely resistible. Conjecture has all the joy and all the pride of invention, and he that has once started a happy change, is too much delighted to consider what objections may rise against it.

Yet conjectural criticism has been of great use in the learned world; nor is it my intention to depreciate a study, that has exercised so many mighty

minds, from the revival of learning to our own age, from the bishop of Aleria to English Bentley. The criticks of ancient authors have, in the exercise of their sagacity, many assistances, which the editor of Shakespeare is condemned to want. They are employed upon grammatical and settled languages, whose construction contributes so much to perspicuity, that Homer has fewer passages unintelligible than Chaucer. The words have not only a known regimen, but invariable quantities, which direct and confine the choice. There are commonly more manuscripts than one; and they do not often conspire in the same mistakes. Yet Scaliger could confess to Salmasius how little satisfaction his emendations gave him. *Illudunt nobis conjecturæ nostræ, quarum nos pudet, posteaquam in meliores codices incidimus.* And Lipsius could complain, that criticks were making faults by trying to remove them, *Ut olim vitiis, ita nunc remediis laboratur.* And, indeed, where mere conjecture is to be used, the emendations of Scaliger and Lipsius, notwithstanding their wonderful sagacity and erudition, are often vague and disputable, like mine or Theobald's.

Perhaps I may not be more censured for doing wrong, than for doing little; for raising in the publick, expectations which at last I have not answered. The expectation of ignorance is indefinite, and that of knowledge is often tyrannical. It is hard to satisfy those who know not what to demand, or those who demand by design what they think impossible to be done. I have indeed disappointed no opinion more than my own; yet I have endeavoured to perform my task with no slight solicitude. Not a

single passage in the whole work has appeared to me corrupt, which I have not attempted to restore; or obscure which I have not endeavoured to illustrate. In many I have failed, like others; and from many, after all my efforts, I have retreated, and confessed the repulse. I have not passed over with affected superiority, what is equally difficult to the reader and to myself, but, where I could not instruct him, have owned my ignorance. I might easily have accumulated a mass of seeming learning upon easy scenes; but it ought not to be imputed to negligence, that, where nothing was necessary, nothing has been done, or that, where others have said enough, I have said no more.

Notes are often necessary, but they are necessary evils. Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakespeare, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play, from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators.

Particular passages are cleared by notes, but the general effect of the work is weakened. The mind is ·erated by interruption; the thoughts are di- from the principal subject; the reader is weary,

he suspects not why; and at last throws away the book which he has too diligently studied.

Parts are not to be examined till the whole has been surveyed; there is a kind of intellectual remoteness necessary for the comprehension of any great work in its full design and in its true proportions; a close approach shews the smaller niceties, but the beauty of the whole is discerned no longer.

It is not very grateful to consider how little the succession of editors has added to this author's power of pleasing. He was read, admired, studied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him; while the reading was yet not rectified, nor his allusions understood; yet then did Dryden pronounce, that Shakespeare was the "man, who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those, who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned: he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is every where alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat and insipid; his comick wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great when some great occasion is presented to him: no man can say, he ever had a fit subject for

his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets,

"Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi."

It is to be lamented, that such a writer should want a commentary; that his language should become obsolete, or his sentiments obscure. But it is vain to carry wishes beyond the condition of human things; that which must happen to all, has happened to Shakespeare, by accident and time; and more than has been suffered by any other writer since the use of types, has been suffered by him, through his own negligence of fame, or perhaps by that superiority of mind, which despised its own performances, when it compared them with its powers, and judged those works unworthy to be preserved, which the criticks of following ages were to contend for the fame of restoring and explaining.

Among these candidates of inferior fame, I am now to stand the judgment of the Publick; and wish that I could confidently produce my commentary as equal to the encouragement which I have had the honour of receiving. Every work of this kind is by its nature deficient, and I should feel little solicitude about the sentence, were it to be pronounced only by the skilful and the learned.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE.

TEMPEST.

It is observed of "The Tempest," that its plan is regular; this the author of "The Revisal*" thinks, what I think too, an accidental effect of the story, not intended or regarded by our author. But whatever might be Shakespeare's intention in forming or adopting the plot, he has made it instrumental to the production of many characters diversified with boundless invention, and preserved with profound skill in nature, extensive knowledge of opinions, and accurate observation of life. In a single drama are here exhibited princes, courtiers, and sailors, all speaking in their real characters. There is the agency of airy spirits, and of an earthly goblin; the operations of magick, the tumults of a storm, the adventures of a desart island, the native effusion of untaught affection, the punishment of guilt, and the final happiness of the pair for whom our passions and reason are equally interested.

* Mr. Heath, who wrote a Revisal of Shakespeare's text, published in 8vo. circa 1760.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

In this play there is a strange mixture of knowledge and ignorance, of care and negligence. The versification is often excellent, the allusions are learned and just; but the author conveys his heroes by sea from one inland town to another in the same country; he places the emperor at Milan, and sends his young men to attend him, but never mentions him more; he makes Protheus, after an interview with Silvia, say he has only seen her picture; and, if we may credit the old copies, he has, by mistaking places, left his scenery inextricable. The reason of all this confusion seems to be, that he took his story from a novel, which he sometimes followed, and sometimes forsook, sometimes remembered, and sometimes forgot.

That this play is rightly attributed to Shakespeare, I have little doubt. If it be taken from him, to whom shall it be given? This question may be asked of all the disputed plays, except "Titus Andronicus;" and it will be found more credible, that Shakespeare might sometimes sink below his highest flights, than that any other should rise up to his lowest.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

Of this play there is a tradition preserved by Mr. Rowe, that it was written at the command of queen Elizabeth, who was so delighted with the character of Falstaff, that she wished it to be diffused through more plays; but suspecting that it might pall by continued uniformity, directed the poet to diversify manner, by shewing him in love. No task is

harder than that of writing to the ideas of another. Shakespeare knew what the queen, if the story be true, seems not to have known, that by any real passion of tenderness, the selfish craft, the careless jollity, and the lazy luxury of Falstaff must have suffered so much abatement, that little of his former cast would have remained. Falstaff could not love, but by ceasing to be Falstaff. He could only counterfeit love, and his professions could be prompted, not by the hope of pleasure, but of money. Thus the poet approached as near as he could to the work enjoined him; yet having perhaps in the former plays completed his own idea, seems not to have been able to give Falstaff all his former power of entertainment.

This comedy is remarkable for the variety and number of the personages, who exhibit more characters appropriated and discriminated, than perhaps can be found in any other play.

Whether Shakespeare was the first that produced upon the English stage the effect of language distorted and depraved by provincial or foreign pronunciation, I cannot certainly decide. This mode of forming ridiculous characters can confer praise only on him, who originally discovered it, for it requires not much of either wit or judgment; its success must be derived almost wholly from the player, but its power in a skilful mouth, even he that despises it, is unable to resist.

The conduct of this drama is deficient; the action begins and ends often before the conclusion, and the different parts might change places without inconvenience; but its general power, that power by which

all works of genius shall finally be tried, is such, that perhaps it never yet had reader or spectator, who did not think it too soon at an end.

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

There is perhaps not one of Shakespeare's plays more darkened than this, by the peculiarities of its author, and the unskilfulness of its editors, by distortions of praise, or negligence of transcription.

The novel of "Giraldi Cynthio," from which Shakespeare is supposed to have borrowed this fable, may be read in "Shakespeare illustrated," elegantly translated, with remarks, which will assist the enquirer to discover how much absurdity Shakespeare has admitted or avoided.

I cannot but suspect that some other had new-modelled this novel of Cynthio, or written a story which in some particulars resembled it, and that Cynthio was not the author whom Shakespeare immediately followed. The emperor, in Cynthio, is named Maximine; the duke, in Shakespeare's enumeration of the persons of the drama, is called Vincentio. This appears a very slight remark; but since the duke has no name in the play, nor is ever mentioned but by his title, why should he be called Vincentio among the *persons*, but because the name was copied from the story, and placed superfluously at the head of the list by the mere habit of transcription? It is therefore likely that there was then a story of Vincentio duke of Vienna, different from that of Maximine emperor of the Romans.

Of this play, the light or comick part is very natural and pleasing, but the grave scenes, if a few pas-

sages be excepted, have more labour than elegance. The plot is rather intricate than artful. The time of the action is indefinite; some time, we know not how much, must have elapsed between the recess of the duke and the imprisonment of Claudio; for he must have learned the story of Mariana in his disguise, or he delegated his power to a man already known to be corrupted. The unities of action and place are sufficiently preserved.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

In this play, which all the editors have concurred to censure, and some have rejected as unworthy of our poet, it must be confessed that there are many passages mean, childish, and vulgar; and some which ought not to have been exhibited, as we are told they were, to a maiden queen. But there are scattered through the whole many sparks of genius; nor is there any play that has more evident marks of the hand of Shakespeare.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

Wild and fantastical as this play is, all the parts in their various modes are well written, and give the kind of pleasure which the author designed. Fairies in his time were much in fashion; common tradition had made them familiar, and Spenser's poem had made them great.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

It has been lately discovered, that this fable is taken from a story in the "Pecorone" of Giovanni

Fiorentino, a novelist, who wrote in 1378. The story has been published in English, and I have epitomized the translation. The translator is of opinion, that the choice of the caskets is borrowed from a tale of Boccace, which I have likewise abridged, though I believe that Shakespeare must have had some other novel in view.

Of "The Merchant of Venice" the style is even and easy, with few peculiarities of diction, or anomalies of construction. The comick part raises laughter, and the serious fixes expectation. The probability of either one or the other story cannot be maintained. The union of two actions in one event is in this drama eminently happy. Dryden was much pleased with his own address in connecting the two plots of his "Spanish Friar," which yet, I believe, the critick will find excelled by this play.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

Of this play the fable is wild and pleasing. I know not how the ladies will approve the facility with which both Rosalind and Celia give away their hearts. To Celia much may be forgiven for the heroism of her friendship. The character of Jaques is natural and well preserved. The comick dialogue is very sprightly, with less mixture of low buffoonery than in some other plays: and the graver part is elegant and harmonious. By hastening to the end of his work, Shakespeare suppressed the dialogue between the usurper and the hermit, and lost an opportunity of exhibiting a moral lesson in which he might have found matter worthy of his highest powers.

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

Of this play the two plots are so well united, that they can hardly be called two without injury to the art with which they are interwoven. The attention is entertained with all the variety of a double plot, yet is not distracted by unconnected incidents.

The part between Katharine and Petruchio is eminently sprightly and diverting. At the marriage of Bianca, the arrival of the real father, perhaps, produces more perplexity than pleasure. The whole play is very popular and diverting.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

This play has many delightful scenes, though not sufficiently probable, and some happy characters though not new, nor produced by any deep knowledge of human nature. Parolles is a boaster and a coward, such as has always been the sport of the stage, but perhaps never raised more laughter or contempt than in the hands of Shakespeare.

I cannot reconcile my heart to Bertram; a man noble without generosity, and young without truth; who marries Helen as a coward, and leaves her as a profligate: when she is dead by his unkindness, sneaks home to a second marriage, is accused by a woman whom he has wronged, defends himself by falsehood, and is dismissed to happiness.

The story of Bertram and Diana had been told before of Mariana and Angelo, and, to confess the truth, scarcely merited to be heard a second time.

TWELFTH-NIGHT.

This play is in the graver part elegant and easy, and in some of the lighter scenes exquisitely humorous. Ague-cheek is drawn with great propriety, but his character is, in a great measure, that of natural fatuity, and is therefore not the proper prey of a satirist. The soliloquy of Malvolio is truly comick; he is betrayed to ridicule merely by his pride. The marriage of Olivia, and the succeeding perplexity, though well enough contrived to divert on the stage, wants credibility, and fails to produce the proper instruction required in the drama, as it exhibits no just picture of life.

WINTER'S TALE.

The story of this play is taken from "The pleasant History of Dorastus and Fawnia," written by Robert Greene.

This play, as Dr. Warburton justly observes, is, with all its absurdities, very entertaining. The character of Autolycus is very naturally conceived, and strongly represented.

MACBETH.

This play is deservedly celebrated for the propriety of its fictions, and solemnity, grandeur, and variety of its action, but it has no nice discriminations of character; the events are too great to admit the influence of particular dispositions, and the course of the action necessarily determines the conduct of the agents.

The danger of ambition is well described: and I

know not whether it may not be said, in defence of some parts which now seem improbable, that, in Shakespeare's time it was necessary to warn credulity against vain and illusive predictions.

The passions are directed to their true end. Lady Macbeth is merely detested; and though the courage of Macbeth preserves some esteem, yet every reader rejoices at his fall.

KING JOHN.

The tragedy of "King John," though not written with the utmost power of Shakespeare, is varied with a very pleasing interchange of incidents and characters. The lady's grief is very affecting; and the character of the bastard contains that mixture of greatness and levity which this author delighted to exhibit.

KING RICHARD II.

This play is extracted from the Chronicle of Holinshed, in which many passages may be found which Shakespeare has, with very little alteration, transplanted into his scenes; particularly a speech of the Bishop of Carlisle in defence of king Richard's unalienable right, and immunity from human jurisdiction.

Jonson, who, in his "Catiline and Sejanus," has inserted many speeches from the Roman historians, was perhaps induced to that practice by the example of Shakespeare, who had condescended sometimes to copy more ignoble writers. But Shakespeare had more of his own than Jonson, and if he sometim was willing to spare his labour, shewed by wha

performed at other times, that his extracts were made by choice or idleness rather than necessity.

This play is one of those which Shakespeare has apparently revised; but as success in works of invention is not always proportionate to labour, it is not finished at last with the happy force of some other of his tragedies, nor can be said much to affect the passions, or enlarge the understanding.

KING HENRY IV. PART II.

I fancy every reader, when he ends this play, cries out with Desdemona, "O most lame and impotent conclusion!" As this play was not, to our knowledge, divided into acts by the author, I could be content to conclude it with the death of Henry the Fourth.

In that Jerusalem shall Harry die.

These scenes, which now make the fifth act of "Henry the Fourth," might then be the first of "Henry the Fifth;" but the truth is, that they do unite very commodiously to either play. When these plays were represented, I believe they ended as they are now ended in the books; but Shakespeare seems to have designed that the whole series of action from the beginning of "Richard the Second," to the end of "Henry the Fifth," should be considered by the reader as one work, upon one plan, only broken into parts by the necessity of exhibition.

None of Shakespeare's plays are more read than the "First and Second Parts of Henry the Fourth." Perhaps no author has ever in two plays afforded so much delight. The great events are interesting, for the fate of kingdoms depend upon them; the

slighter occurrences are diverting, and, except one or two, sufficiently probable; the incidents are multiplied with wonderful fertility of invention, and the characters diversified with the utmost nicety of discernment, and the profoundest skill in the nature of man.

The prince, who is the hero both of the comick and tragick part, is a young man of great abilities and violent passions, whose sentiments are right, though his actions are wrong; whose virtues are obscured by negligence, and whose understanding is dissipated by levity. In his idle hours he is rather loose than wicked; and when the occasion forces out his latent qualities, he is great without effort, and brave without tumult. The trifler is roused into a hero, and the hero again reposes in the trifler. This character is great, original, and just.

Percy is a rugged soldier, cholerick, and quarrelsome, and has only the soldier's virtues, generosity and courage.

But Falstaff, unimitated, unimitable Falstaff, how shall I describe thee? Thou compound of sense and vice: of sense which may be admired, but not esteemed; of vice which may be despised, but hardly detested. Falstaff is a character loaded with faults, and with those faults which naturally produce contempt. He is a thief and a glutton, a coward and a boaster, always ready to cheat the weak, and prey upon the poor; to terrify the timorous, and insult the defenceless. At once obsequious and malignant, he satirizes in their absence those whom he lives by flattering. He is familiar with the prince only as an agent of vice, but of this familiarity he

is so proud, as not only to be supercilious and haughty with common men, but to think his interest of importance to the duke of Lancaster. Yet the man thus corrupt, thus despicable, makes himself necessary to the prince that despises him, by the most pleasing of all qualities, perpetual gaiety, by an unfailing power of exciting laughter, which is the more freely indulged, as his wit is not of the splendid or ambitious kind, but consists in easy scapes and sallies of levity, which make sport, but raise no envy. It must be observed, that he is stained with no enormous or sanguinary crimes, so that his licentiousness is not so offensive but that it may be borne for his mirth.

The moral to be drawn from this representation is, that no man is more dangerous than he that, with a will to corrupt, hath the power to please; and that neither wit nor honesty ought to think themselves safe with such a companion, when they see Henry seduced by Falstaff.

KING HENRY V.

This play has many scenes of high dignity, and many of easy merriment. The character of the king is well supported, except in his courtship, where he has neither the vivacity of Hal, nor the grandeur of Henry. The humour of Pistol is very happily continued: his character has perhaps been the model of all the bullies that have yet appeared on the English stage.

The lines given to the Chorus have many admirers; but the truth is, that in them a little may be praised, and much must be forgiven: nor can it

be easily discovered why the intelligence given by the Chorus is more necessary in this play than in many others where it is omitted. The great defect of this play is the emptiness and narrowness of the last act, which a very little diligence might have easily avoided.

KING HENRY VI. PART I.

Of this play there is no copy earlier than that of the folio in 1623, though the two succeeding parts are extant in two editions in quarto. That the second and third parts were published without the first, may be admitted as no weak proof that the copies were surreptitiously obtained, and that the printers of that time gave the publick those plays, not such as the author designed, but such as they could get them. That this play was written before the two others is indubitably collected from the series of events; that it was written and played before Henry the Fifth is apparent, because in the epilogue there is mention made of this play, and not of the other parts:

> Henry the Sixth in swaddling bands crown'd king,
> Whose state so many had the managing
> That they lost France, and made his England bleed,
> Which oft our stage hath shewn.

France is lost in this play. The two following contain, as the old title imports, the contention of the houses of York and Lancaster.

The second and third parts of "Henry VI." were printed in 1600. When "Henry V." was written, we know not, but it was printed likewise in 1600, and therefore before the publication of the first part:

the first part of "Henry VI." had been often shewn on the stage, and would certainly have appeared in its place had the author been the publisher.

KING HENRY VI. PART III.

The three parts of "Henry VI." are suspected, by Mr. Theobald, of being supposititious, and are declared, by Dr. Warburton, to be certainly not Shakespeare's. Mr. Theobald's suspicion arises from some obsolete words; but the phraseology is like the rest of our author's style, and single words, of which however I do not observe more than two, can conclude little.

Dr. Warburton gives no reason, but I suppose him to judge upon deeper principles and more comprehensive views, and to draw his opinion from the general effect and spirit of the composition, which he thinks inferior to the other historical plays.

From mere inferiority nothing can be inferred; in the productions of wit there will be inequality. Sometimes judgment will err, and sometimes the matter itself will defeat the artist. Of every author's works one will be the best, and one will be the worst. The colours are not equally pleasing, nor the attitudes equally graceful, in all the pictures of Titian or Reynolds.

Dissimilitude of style, and heterogeneousness of sentiment, may sufficiently show that a work does not really belong to the reputed author. But in these plays no such marks of spuriousness are found. The diction, the versification, and the figures, are Shakespeare's. These plays, considered, without regard to characters and incidents, merely as narra-

tives in verse, are more happily conceived, and more accurately finished than those of "King John," "Richard II." or the tragick scenes of "Henry IV. and V." If we take these plays from Shakespeare, to whom shall they be given? What author of that age had the same easiness of expression and fluency of numbers?

Having considered the evidence given by the plays themselves, and found it in their favour, let us now enquire what corroboration can be gained from other testimony. They are ascribed to Shakespeare by the first editors, whose attestation may be received in questions of fact, however unskilfully they superintended their edition. They seem to be declared genuine by the voice of Shakespeare himself, who refers to the second play in his epilogue to "Henry V." and apparently connects the first act of "Richard III." with the last of the third part of "Henry VI." If it be objected that the plays were popular, and that therefore he alluded to them as well known; it may be answered, with equal probability, that the natural passions of a poet would have disposed him to separate his own works from those of an inferior hand. And, indeed, if an author's own testimony is to be overthrown by speculative criticism, no man can be any longer secure of literary reputation.

Of these three plays I think the second the best. The truth is, that they have not sufficient variety of action, for the incidents are too often of the same kind; yet many of the characters are well discriminated. King Henry and his queen, king Edward,

the duke of Gloucester, and the Earl of Warwick, are very strongly and distinctly painted.

The old copies of the two latter parts of "Henry VI." and of "Henry V." are so apparently imperfect and mutilated, that there is no reason for supposing them the first draughts of Shakespeare. I am inclined to believe them copies taken by some auditor who wrote down, during the representation, what the time would permit, then perhaps filled up some of his omissions at a second or third hearing, and when he had by this method formed something like a play, sent it to the printer.

KING RICHARD III.

This is one of the most celebrated of our author's performances; yet I know not whether it has not happened to him as to others, to be praised most, when praise is not most deserved. That this play has scenes noble in themselves, and very well contrived to strike in the exhibition, cannot be denied. But some parts are trifling, others shocking, and some improbable.

I have nothing to add to the observations of the learned criticks, but that some traces of this antiquated exhibition are still retained in the rustick puppet-plays, in which I have seen the Devil very lustily belaboured by Punch, whom I hold to be the legitimate successor of the old Vice.

KING HENRY VIII.

The play of "Henry the Eighth" is one of those which still keeps possession of the stage by the splendour of its pageantry. The coronation, about

forty years ago, drew the people together in multitudes for a great part of the winter. Yet pomp is not the only merit of this play. The meek sorrows and virtuous distress of Katharine have furnished some scenes, which may be justly numbered among the greatest efforts of tragedy. But the genius of Shakespeare comes in and goes out with Katharine. Every other part may be easily conceived, and easily written.

The historical dramas are now concluded, of which the two parts of "Henry the Fourth," and "Henry the Fifth," are among the happiest of our author's compositions; and "King John," "Richard the Third," and "Henry the Eighth," deservedly stand in the second class. Those whose curiosity would refer the historical scenes to their original, may consult Holinshed, and sometimes Hall: from Holinshed, Shakespeare has often inserted whole speeches with no more alteration than was necessary to the numbers of his verse. To transcribe them into the margin was unnecessary, because the original is easily examined, and they are seldom less perspicuous in the poet than in the historian.

To play histories, or to exhibit a succession of events by action and dialogue, was a common entertainment among our rude ancestors upon great festivities. The parish clerks once performed at Clerkenwell a play which lasted three days, containing "The History of the World."

CORIOLANUS.

The tragedy of "Coriolanus" is one of the most amusing of our author's performances. The old

man's merriment in Menenius; the lofty lady's dignity in Volumnia; the bridal modesty in Virgilia; the patrician and military haughtiness in Coriolanus; the plebeian malignity, and tribunitian insolence in Brutus and Sicinius, make a very pleasing and interesting variety: and the various revolutions of the hero's fortune fill the mind with anxious curiosity. There is, perhaps, too much bustle in the first act, and too little in the last.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

Of this tragedy many particular passages deserve regard, and the contention and reconcilement of Brutus and Cassius is universally celebrated; but I have never been strongly agitated in perusing it, and think it somewhat cold and unaffecting, compared with some other of Shakespeare's plays; his adherence to the real story, and to Roman manners, seems to have impeded the natural vigour of his genius.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.

This play keeps curiosity always busy, and the passions always interested. The continual hurry of the action, the variety of incidents, and the quick succession of one personage to another, call the mind forward without intermission from the first act to the last. But the power of delighting is derived principally from the frequent changes of the scene; for except the feminine arts, some of which are too low, which distinguish Cleopatra, no character is very strongly discriminated. Upton, who did not easily miss what he desired to find, has discovered

that the language of Antony is, with great skill and learning, made pompous and superb, according to his real practice. But I think his diction not distinguishable from that of others: the most tumid speech in the play is that which Cæsar makes to Octavia.

The events, of which the principal are described according to history, are produced without any art of connection or care of disposition.

TIMON OF ATHENS.

The play of "Timon" is a domestick tragedy, and therefore strongly fastens on the attention of the reader. In the plan there is not much art, but the incidents are natural, and the characters various and exact. The catastrophe affords a very powerful warning against that ostentatious liberality, which scatters bounty, but confers no benefits, and buys flattery, but not friendship.

In this tragedy, are many passages perplexed, obscure, and probably corrupt, which I have endeavoured to rectify, or explain, with due diligence; but having only one copy, cannot promise myself that my endeavours shall be much applauded.

TITUS ANDRONICUS.

All the editors and criticks agree with Mr. Theobald in supposing this play spurious. I see no reason for differing from them; for the colour of the style is wholly different from that of the other plays, and there is an attempt at regular versification, and artificial closes, not always inelegant, yet seldom pleasing. The barbarity of the spectacles, and the

general massacre, which are here exhibited, can scarcely be conceived tolerable to any audience; yet we are told by Jonson, that they were not only borne, but praised. That Shakespeare wrote any part, though Theobald declares it incontestable, I see no reason for believing.

The testimony produced at the beginning of this play, by which it is ascribed to Shakespeare, is by no means equal to the argument against its authenticity, arising from the total difference of conduct, language, and sentiments, by which it stands apart from all the rest. Meres had probably no other evidence, than that of a title-page, which, though in our time it be sufficient, was then of no great authority; for all the plays which were rejected by the first collectors of Shakespeare's works, and admitted in later editions, and again rejected by the critical editors, had Shakespeare's name on the title, as we may suppose, by the fraudulence of the printers, who, while there were yet no gazettes, nor advertisements, nor any means of circulating literary intelligence, could usurp at pleasure any celebrated name. Nor had Shakespeare any interest in detecting the imposture, as none of his fame or profit was produced by the press.

The chronology of this play does not prove it not to be Shakespeare's. If it had been written twenty-five years in 1614, it might have been written when Shakespeare was twenty-five years old. When he left Warwickshire I know not; but at the age of twenty-five it was rather too late to fly for deer-stealing.

Ravenscroft, who in the reign of Charles II. revised this play, and restored it to the stage, tells us, in his preface, from a theatrical tradition, I suppose, which in his time might be of sufficient authority, that this play was touched in different parts by Shakespeare, but written by some other poet. I do not find Shakespeare's touches very discernible.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

This play is more correctly written than most of Shakespeare's compositions, but it is not one of those in which either the extent of his views or elevation of his fancy is fully displayed. As the story abounded with materials, he has exerted little invention; but he has diversified his characters with great variety, and preserved them with great exactness. His vicious characters sometimes disgust, but cannot corrupt, for both Cressida and Pandarus are detested and contemned. The comick characters seem to have been the favourites of the writer; they are of the superficial kind, and exhibit more of manners than nature; but they are copiously filled, and powerfully impressed.

Shakespeare has in his story followed for the greater part the old book of Caxton, which was then very popular: but the character of Thersites, of which it makes no mention, is a proof that this play was written after Chapman had published his version of Homer.

CYMBELINE.

This play has many just sentiments, some natural dialogues, and some pleasing scenes, but they are

obtained at the expense of much incongruity. To remark the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the confusion of the names, and manners of different times, and the impossibility of the events in any system of life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting imbecility, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation.

KING LEAR.

The tragedy of "Lear" is deservedly celebrated among the dramas of Shakespeare. There is perhaps no play which keeps the attention so strongly fixed; which so much agitates our passions, and interests our curiosity. The artful involutions of distinct interests, the striking opposition of contrary characters, the sudden changes of fortune, and the quick succession of events, fill the mind with a perpetual tumult of indignation, pity, and hope. There is no scene which does not contribute to the aggravation of the distress or conduct of the action, and scarce a line which does not conduce to the progress of the scene. So powerful is the current of the poet's imagination, that the mind, which once ventures within it, is hurried irresistibly along.

On the seeming improbability of Lear's conduct, it may be observed, that he is represented according to histories at that time vulgarly received as true. And, perhaps, if we turn our thoughts upon the barbarity and ignorance of the age to which this story is referred, it will appear not so unlikely as while we estimate Lear's manners by our own. Such preference of one daughter to another, or resignation of dominion on such conditions, would be yet credible,

if told of a petty prince of Guinea or Madagascar. Shakespeare, indeed, by the mention of his earls and dukes, has given us the idea of times more civilized, and of life regulated by softer manners; and the truth is, that though he so nicely discriminates, and so minutely describes the characters of men, he commonly neglects and confounds the characters of ages, by mingling customs ancient and modern, English and foreign.

My learned friend Mr. Warton, who has in "The Adventurer" very minutely criticised this play, remarks, that the instances of cruelty are too savage and shocking, and that the intervention of Edmund destroys the simplicity of the story. These objections may, I think, be answered, by repeating, that the cruelty of the daughters is an historical fact, to which the poet has added little, having only drawn it into a series by dialogue and action. But I am not able to apologize with equal plausibility for the extrusion of Gloster's eyes, which seems an act too horrid to be endured in dramatick exhibition, and such as must always compel the mind to relieve its distress by incredulity. Yet let it be remembered that our author well knew what would please the audience for which he wrote.

The injury done by Edmund to the simplicity of the action is abundantly recompensed by the addition of variety, by the art with which he is made to cooperate with the chief design, and the opportunity which he gives the poet of combining perfidy with perfidy, and connecting the wicked son with the wicked daughters to impress this important moral, that villainy is never at a stop, that crimes lead to crimes, and at last terminate in ruin.

But though this moral be incidentally enforced, Shakespeare has suffered the virtue of Cordelia to perish in a just cause, contrary to the natural ideas of justice, to the hope of the reader, and, what is yet more strange, to the faith of chronicles. Yet this conduct is justified by "The Spectator," who blames Tate for giving Cordelia success and happiness in his alteration, and declares, that in his opinion *the tragedy has lost half its beauty.* Dennis has remarked, whether justly or not, that, to secure the favourable reception of "Cato," *the town was poisoned with much false and abominable criticism,* and that endeavours had been used to discredit and decry poetical justice. A play in which the wicked prosper, and the virtuous miscarry, may doubtless be good, because it is a just representation of the common events of human life: but since all reasonable beings naturally love justice, I cannot easily be persuaded, that the observation of justice makes a play worse; or that, if other excellencies are equal, the audience will not always rise better pleased from the final triumph of persecuted virtue.

In the present case the publick has decided. Cordelia, from the time of Tate, has always retired with victory and felicity. And, if my sensations could add any thing to the general suffrage, I might relate, I was many years ago so shocked by Cordelia's death, that I know not whether I ever endured to read again the last scenes of the play till I undertook to revise them as an editor.

There is another controversy among the criticks concerning this play. It is disputed whether the predominant image in Lear's disordered mind be

the loss of his kingdom or the cruelty of his daughters. Mr. Murphy, a very judicious critick, has evinced by induction of particular passages, that the cruelty of his daughters is the primary source of his distress, and that the loss of royalty affects him only as a secondary and subordinate evil. He observes with great justness, that Lear would move our compassion but little, did we not rather consider the injured father than the degraded king.

The story of this play, except the episode of Edmund, which is derived, I think, from Sidney, is taken originally from Geoffry of Monmouth, whom Holinshed generally copied; but perhaps immediately from an old historical ballad. My reason for believing that the play was posterior to the ballad, rather than the ballad to the play, is, that the ballad has nothing of Shakespeare's nocturnal tempest, which is too striking to have been omitted, and that it follows the chronicle; it has the rudiments of the play, but none of its amplifications: it first hinted Lear's madness, but did not array it in circumstances. The writer of the ballad added something to the history, which is a proof that he would have added more, if more had occurred to his mind, and more must have occurred if he had seen Shakespeare.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

This play is one of the most pleasing of our author's performances. The scenes are busy and various, the incidents numerous and important, the catastrophe irresistibly affecting, and the process of the action carried on with such probability, at

least with such congruity to popular opinions, as tragedy requires.

Here is one of the few attempts of Shakespeare to exhibit the conversation of gentlemen, to represent the airy sprightliness of juvenile elegance. Mr. Dryden mentions a tradition, which might easily reach his time, of a declaration made by Shakespeare, that *he was obliged to kill Mercutio in the third act, lest he should have been killed by him.* Yet he thinks him *no such formidable person but that he might have lived through the play, and died in his bed,* without danger to the poet. Dryden well knew, had he been in quest of truth, that, in a pointed sentence, more regard is commonly had to the words than the thought, and that it is very seldom to be rigorously understood. Mercutio's wit, gaiety, and courage, will always procure him friends that wish him a longer life; but his death is not precipitated, he has lived out the time allotted him in the construction of the play; nor do I doubt the ability of Shakespeare to have continued his existence, though some of his sallies are perhaps out of the reach of Dryden; whose genius was not very fertile of merriment, nor ductile to humour, but acute, argumentative, comprehensive, and sublime.

The Nurse is one of the characters in which the author delighted; he has, with great subtility of distinction, drawn her at once loquacious and secret, obsequious and insolent, trusty and dishonest.

His comick scenes are happily wrought, but his pathetick strains are always polluted with some unexpected depravations. His persons, however dis-

tressed, *have a conceit left them in their misery, a miserable conceit.*

HAMLET.

If the dramas of Shakespeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of "Hamlet" the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity; with merriment, that includes judicious and instructive observations; and solemnity, not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the mad man most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has by the stratagem of the play, convicted the king, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity, than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily have been formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having shewn little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification, which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious.

OTHELLO.

The beauties of this play impress themselves so strongly upon the attention of the reader, that they can draw no aid from critical illustration. The fiery openness of Othello, magnanimous, artless, and credulous, boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge; the cool malignity of Iago, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance; the soft

simplicity of Desdemona, confident of merit, and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance in her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proofs of Shakespeare's skill in human nature, as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern writer. The gradual progress which Iago makes in the Moor's conviction, and the circumstances which he employs to inflame him, are so artfully natural, that, though it will perhaps not be said of him as he says of himself, that he is *a man not easily jealous*, yet we cannot but pity him, when at last we find him *perplexed in the extreme.*

There is always danger, lest wickedness, conjoined with abilities, should steal upon esteem, though it misses of approbation; but the character of Iago is so conducted, that he is from the first scene to the last hated and despised.

Even the inferior characters of this play would be very conspicuous in any other piece, not only for their justness, but their strength. Cassio is brave, benevolent, and honest, ruined only by his want of stubbornness to resist an insidious invitation. Roderigo's suspicious credulity, and impatient submission to the cheats which he sees practised upon him, and which by persuasion he suffers to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind betrayed by unlawful desires to a false friend; and the virtue of Æmilia is such as we often find worn loosely, but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villainies.

The scenes from the beginning to the end are busy, varied by happy interchanges, and regularly promoting the progression of the story; and the nar-

rative in the end, though it tells but what is known already, yet is necessary to produce the death of Othello.

Had the scene opened in Cyprus, and the preceding incidents been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity.

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

HARLEIAN LIBRARY.

To solicit a subscription for a Catalogue of Books exposed to sale, is an attempt for which some apology cannot but be necessary; for few would willingly contribute to the expense of volumes, by which neither instruction nor entertainment could be afforded, from which only the bookseller could expect advantage, and of which the only use must cease, at the dispersion of the library.

Nor could the reasonableness of an universal rejection of our proposal be denied, if this catalogue were to be compiled with no other view, than that of promoting the sale of the books which it enumerates, and drawn up with that inaccuracy and confusion which may be found in those that are daily published.

But our design, like our proposal, is uncommon, and to be prosecuted at a very uncommon expense: it being intended, that the books shall be distributed into their distinct classes, and every class ranged with some regard to the age of the writers

that every book shall be accurately described; that the peculiarities of editions shall be remarked, and observations from the authors of literary history occasionally interspersed; that, by this catalogue, we may inform posterity of the excellence and value of this great collection, and promote the knowledge of scarce books, and elegant editions. For this purpose men of letters are engaged, who cannot even be supplied with amanuenses, but at an expense above that of a common catalogue.

To shew that this collection deserves a particular degree of regard from the learned and the studious, that it excels any library that was ever yet offered to public sale in the value as well as number of the volumes which it contains; and that therefore this catalogue will not be of less use to men of letters, than those of the Thuanian, Heinsian, or Barberinian libraries, it may not be improper to exhibit a general account of the different classes, as they are naturally divided by the several sciences.

By this method we can indeed exhibit only a general idea, at once magnificent and confused; an idea of the writings of many nations, collected from distant parts of the world, discovered sometimes by chance, and sometimes by curiosity, amidst the rubbish of forsaken monasteries, and the repositories of ancient families, and brought hither from every part, as to the universal receptacle of learning.

It will be no unpleasing effect of this account, if those that shall happen to peruse it, should be inclined by it to reflect on the character of the late proprietors, and to pay some tribute of veneration to their ardour for literature, to that generous and

exalted curiosity which they gratified with incessant searches and immense expense, and to which they dedicated that time, and that superfluity of fortune, which many others of their rank employ in the pursuit of contemptible amusements, or the gratification of guilty passions. And, surely, every man, who considers learning as ornamental and advantageous to the community, must allow them the honour of publick benefactors, who have introduced amongst us authors not hitherto well known, and added to the literary treasures of their native country.

That our catalogue will excite any other man to emulate the collectors of this library, to prefer books and manuscripts to equipage and luxury, and to forsake noise and diversion for the conversation of the learned, and the satisfaction of extensive knowledge, we are very far from presuming to hope; but shall make no scruple to assert, that, if any man should happen to be seized with such laudable ambition, he may find in this catalogue hints and informations, which are not easily to be met with; he will discover, that the boasted Bodleian library is very far from a perfect model, and that even the learned Fabricius cannot completely instruct him in the early editions of the classic writers.

But the collectors of libraries cannot be numerous; and, therefore, catalogues cannot very properly be recommended to the publick, if they had not a more general and frequent use, an use which every student has experienced, or neglected to his loss. By the means of catalogues only can it be known, what has been written on every part of

learning, and the hazard avoided of encountering difficulties which have already been cleared, discussing questions which have already been decided, and digging in mines of literature which former ages have exhausted.

How often this has been the fate of students, every man of letters can declare; and, perhaps, there are very few who have not sometimes valued as new discoveries, made by themselves, those observations, which have long since been published, and of which the world therefore will refuse them the praise; nor can the refusal be censured as any enormous violation of justice; for, why should they not forfeit by their ignorance, what they might claim by their sagacity?

To illustrate this remark, by the mention of obscure names, would not much confirm it; and to vilify for this purpose the memory of men truly great, would be to deny them the reverence which they may justly claim from those whom their writings have instructed. May the shade, at least, of one great English critick rest without disturbance; and may no man presume to insult his memory, who wants his learning, his reason, or his wit.

From the vexatious disappointment of meeting reproach, where praise is expected, every man will certainly desire to be secured; and therefore that book will have some claim to his regard, from which he may receive informations of the labours of his predecessors, such as a catalogue of the Harleian library will copiously afford him.

Nor is the use of catalogues of less importance to those whom curiosity has engaged in the study of

literary history, and who think the intellectual revolutions of the world more worthy of their attention than the ravages of tyrants, the desolation of kingdoms, the rout of armies, and the fall of empires. Those who are pleased with observing the first birth of new opinions, their struggles against opposition, their silent progress under persecution, their general reception, and their gradual decline, or sudden extinction; those that amuse themselves with remarking the different periods of human knowledge, and observe how darkness and light succeed each other; by what accident the most gloomy nights of ignorance have given way to the dawn of science, and how learning has languished and decayed, for want of patronage and regard, or been overborne by the prevalence of fashionable ignorance, or lost amidst the tumults of invasion, and the storms of violence. All those, who desire any knowledge of the literary transactions of past ages, may find in catalogues, like this at least, such an account as is given by annalists, and chronologers of civil history.

How the knowledge of the sacred writings has been diffused, will be observed from the catalogue of the various editions of the Bible, from the first impression by Fust, in 1462, to the present time; in which will be contained the polyglot editions of Spain, France, and England, those of the original Hebrew, the Greek Septuagint, and the Latin Vulgate; with the versions which are now used in the remotest parts of Europe, in the country of the Grisons, in Lithuania, Bohemia, Finland, and Iceland.

With regard to the attempts of the same kind made in our own country, there are few whose ex-

pectations will not be exceeded by the number of English bibles, of which not one is forgotten, whether valuable for the pomp and beauty of the impression, or for the notes with which the text is accompanied, or for any controversy or persecution that it produced, or for the peculiarity of any single passage. With the same care have the various editions of the book of common-prayer been selected, from which all the alterations which have been made in it may be easily remarked.

Amongst a great number of Roman missals and breviaries, remarkable for the beauty of their cuts and illuminations, will be found the Mosarabic missal and breviary, that raised such commotions in the kingdom of Spain.

The controversial treaties written in England, about the time of the Reformation, have been diligently collected, with a multitude of remarkable tracts, single sermons, and small treatises; which, however worthy to be preserved, are, perhaps, to be found in no other place.

The regard which was always paid, by the collectors of this library, to that remarkable period of time, in which the art of printing was invented, determined them to accumulate the ancient impressions of the fathers of the church; to which the later editions are added, lest antiquity should have seemed more worthy of esteem than accuracy.

History has been considered with the regard due to that study by which the manners are most easily formed, and from which the most efficacious instruction is received; nor will the most extensive curiosity fail of gratification in this library; from which

no writers have been excluded, that relate either to the religious or civil affairs of any nation.

Not only those authors of ecclesiastical history have been procured, that treat of the state of religion in general, or deliver accounts of sects or nations, but those likewise who have confined themselves to particular orders of men in every church; who have related the original, and the rules of every society, or recounted the lives of its founder and its members; those who have deduced in every country the succession of bishops, and those who have employed their abilities in celebrating the piety of particular saints, or martyrs, or monks, or nuns.

The civil history of all nations has been amassed together; nor is it easy to determine which, has been thought most worthy of curiosity.

Of France, not only the general histories and antient chronicles, the accounts of celebrated reigns, and narratives of remarkable events, but even the memorials of single families, the lives of private men, the antiquities of particular cities, churches, and monasteries, the topography of provinces, and the accounts of laws, customs, and prescriptions, are here to be found.

The several states of Italy have, in this treasury, their particular historians, whose accounts are, perhaps, generally more exact, by being less extensive; and more interesting, by being more particular.

Nor has less regard been paid to the different nations of the Germanic empire, of which neither the Bohemians, nor Hungarians, nor Austrians, nor Bavarians, have been neglected; nor have their antiquities, however generally disregarded, been less studiously searched, than their present state.

The northern nations have supplied this collection, not only with history, but poetry, with Gothic antiquities and Runic inscriptions; which at least have this claim to veneration, above the remains of the Roman magnificence, that they are the works of those heroes by whom the Roman empire was destroyed; and which may plead, at least in this nation, that they ought not to be neglected by those that owe to the men whose memories they preserve, their constitution, their properties, and their liberties.

The curiosity of these collectors extends equally to all parts of the world; nor did they forget to add to the northern the southern writers, or to adorn their collection with chronicles of Spain, and the conquest of Mexico.

Even of those nations with which we have less intercourse, whose customs are less accurately known, and whose history is less distinctly recounted, there are in this library reposited such accounts as the Europeans have been hitherto able to obtain; nor are the Mogul, the Tartar, the Turk, and the Saracen, without their historians.

That persons so inquisitive with regard to the transactions of other nations, should enquire yet more ardently after the history of their own, may be naturally expected; and, indeed, this part of the library is no common instance of diligence and accuracy. Here are to be found, with the ancient chronicles, and larger histories of Britain, the narratives of single reigns, and the accounts of remarkable revolutions, the topographical histories of counties, the pedigrees of families, the antiquities of churches and cities, the proceedings of parliaments, the records of

monasteries, and the lives of particular men, whether eminent in the church or the state, or remarkable in private life; whether exemplary for their virtues, or detestable for their crimes; whether persecuted for religion, or executed for rebellion.

That memorable period of the English history, which begins with the reign of king Charles the First, and ends with the Restoration, will almost furnish a library alone, such is the number of volumes, pamphlets, and papers, which were published by either party; and such is the care with which they have been preserved.

Nor is history without the necessary preparatives and attendants, geography and chronology: of geography, the best writers and delineators have been procured, and pomp and accuracy have both been regarded: the student of chronology may here find likewise those authors who searched the records of time, and fixed the periods of history.

With the historians and geographers may be ranked the writers of voyages and travels, which may be read here in the Latin, English, Dutch, German, French, Italian, and Spanish languages.

The laws of different countries, as they are in themselves equally worthy of curiosity with their history, have, in this collection, been justly regarded; and the rules by which the various communities of the world are governed, may be here examined and compared. Here are the ancient editions of the papal decretals, and the commentators on the civil law, the edicts of Spain, and the statutes of Venice.

But with particular industry have the various writers on the laws of our own country been collect-

ed, from the most ancient to the present time, from the bodies of the statutes to the minutest treatise; not only the reports, precedents, and readings of our own courts, but even the laws of our West-Indian colonies, will be exhibited in our catalogue.

But neither history nor law have been so far able to engross this library, as to exclude physic, philosophy, or criticism. Those have been thought, with justice, worthy of a place, who have examined the different species of animals, delineated their forms, or described their properties and instincts; or who have penetrated the bowels of the earth, treated on its different strata, and analysed its metals; or who have amused themselves with less laborious speculations, and planted trees, or cultivated flowers.

Those that have exalted their thoughts above the minuter parts of the creation, who have observed the motions of the heavenly bodies, and attempted systems of the universe, have not been denied the honour which they deserved by so great an attempt, whatever has been their success. Nor have those mathematicians been rejected, who have applied their science to the common purposes of life; or those that have deviated into the kindred arts, of tactics, architecture, and fortification.

Even arts of far less importance have found their authors, nor have these authors been despised by the boundless curiosity of the proprietors of the Harleian library. The writers on horsemanship and fencing are more numerous, and more bulky, than could be expected by those who reflect how seldom those excel in either, whom their education has qualified to compose books.

The admirer of Greek and Roman literature will meet, in this collection, with editions little known to the most inquisitive criticks, and which have escaped the observation of those whose great employment has been the collation of copies; nor will he find only the most antient editions of Faustus, Jenson, Spira, Sweynheim and Pannartz, but the most accurate likewise and beautiful of Colinæus, the Juntæ, Plantin, Aldus, the Stephens, and Elzevir, with the commentaries and observations of the most learned editors.

Nor are they accompanied only with the illustrations of those who have confined their attempts to particular writers, but of those likewise who have treated on any part of the Greek or Roman antiquities, their laws, their customs, their dress, their buildings, their wars, their revenues, or the rites and ceremonies of their worship, and those that have endeavoured to explain any of their authors from their statues or their coins.

Next to the ancients, those writers deserve to be mentioned, who, at the restoration of literature, imitated their language and their style with so great success, or who laboured with so much industry to make them understood: such were Philelphus and Politian, Scaliger and Buchanan, and the poets of the age of Leo the Tenth; these are likewise to be found in this library, together with the *Deliciæ*, or collections of all nations.

Painting is so nearly allied to poetry, that it cannot be wondered that those who have so much esteemed the one, have paid an equal regard to the other; and therefore it may be easily imagined,

that the collection of prints is numerous in an uncommon degree; but, surely, the expectation of every man will be exceeded, when he is informed that there are more than forty thousand engraven from Raphael, Titian, Guido, the Carraches, and a thousand others, by Nanteuil, Hollar, Collet, Edelinck, and Dorigny, and other engravers of equal reputation.

There is also a great collection of original drawings, of which three seem to deserve a particular mention: the first exhibits a representation of the inside of St. Peter's church at Rome; the second, of that of St. John Lateran; and the third, of the high altar of St. Ignatius: all painted with the utmost accuracy, in their proper colours.

As the value of this great collection may be conceived from this account, however imperfect, as the variety of subjects must engage the curiosity of men of different studies, inclinations, and employments, it may be thought of very little use to mention any slighter advantages, or to dwell on the decorations and embellishments which the generosity of the proprietors has bestowed upon it; yet, since the compiler of the Thuanian catalogue thought not even that species of elegance below his observation, it may not be improper to observe, that the Harleian library, perhaps, excels all others, not more in the number and excellence, than in the splendour of its volumes.

We may now surely be allowed to hope, that our catalogue will not be thought unworthy of the publick curiosity; that it will be purchased as a record of

this great collection, and preserved as one of the memorials of learning.

The patrons of literature will forgive the purchaser of this library, if he presumes to assert some claim to their protection and encouragement, as he may have been instrumental in continuing to this nation the advantage of it. The sale of Vossius's collection into a foreign country, is, to this day, regretted by men of letters; and if this effort for the prevention of another loss of the same kind should be disadvantageous to him, no man will hereafter willingly risque his fortune in the cause of learning.

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

ORIGIN AND IMPORTANCE

OF

SMALL TRACTS AND FUGITIVE PIECES.

WRITTEN FOR THE INTRODUCTION TO

THE HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.

THOUGH the scheme of the following Miscellany is so obvious, that the title alone is sufficient to explain it; and though several collections have been formerly attempted upon plans, as to the method, very little, but, as to the capacity and execution, very different from ours; we, being possessed of the greatest variety for such a work, hope for a more general reception than those confined schemes had the fortune to meet with; and, therefore, think it not wholly unnecessary to explain our intentions, to display the treasure of materials out of which this Miscellany is to be compiled, and to exhibit a general idea of the pieces which we intend to insert in it.

There is, perhaps, no nation in which it is so necessary, as in our own, to assemble, from time to

time, the small tracts and fugitive pieces, which are occasionally published; for, besides the general subjects of enquiry, which are cultivated by us, in common with every other learned nation, our constitution in church and state naturally gives birth to a multitude of performances, which would either not have been written, or could not have been made publick in any other place.

The form of our government, which gives every man, that has leisure, or curiosity, or vanity, the right of enquiring into the propriety of publick measures, and by consequence, obliges those who are intrusted with the administration of national affairs, to give an account of their conduct to almost every man who demands it, may be reasonably imagined to have occasioned innumerable pamphlets, which would never have appeared under arbitrary governments, where every man lulls himself in indolence under calamities, of which he cannot promote the redress, or thinks it prudent to conceal the uneasiness, of which he cannot complain without danger.

The multiplicity of religious sects tolerated among us, of which every one has found opponents and vindicators, is another source of unexhaustible publication, almost peculiar to ourselves; for controversies cannot be long continued, nor frequently revived, where an inquisitor has a right to shut up the disputants in dungeons; or where silence can be imposed on either party, by the refusal of a licence.

Not that it should be inferred from hence, that political or religious controversies are the only products of the liberty of the British press; the mind once let loose to enquiry, and suffered to operate

without restraint, necessarily deviates into peculiar opinions, and wanders in new tracts, where she is indeed sometimes lost in a labyrinth, from which though she cannot return, and scarce knows how to proceed; yet, sometimes, makes useful discoveries, or finds out nearer paths to knowledge.

The boundless liberty with which every man may write his own thoughts, and the opportunity of conveying new sentiments to the publick, without danger of suffering either ridicule or censure, which every man may enjoy, whose vanity does not incite him too hastily to own his performances, naturally invites those who employ themselves in speculation, to try how their notions will be received by a nation, which exempts caution from fear, and modesty from shame; and it is no wonder, that where reputation may be gained, but needs not be lost, multitudes are willing to try their fortune, and thrust their opinions into the light; sometimes with unsuccessful haste, and sometimes with happy temerity.

It is observed, that, among the natives of England, is to be found a greater variety of humour, than in any other country; and doubtless, where every man has a full liberty to propagate his conceptions, variety of humour must produce variety of writers; and, where the number of authors is so great, there cannot but be some worthy of distinction.

All these, and many other causes, too tedious to be enumerated, have contributed to make pamphlets and small tracts a very important part of an English library; nor are there any pieces, upon which those, who aspire to the reputation of judicious collectors of books, bestow more attention, or greater expense;

because many advantages may be expected from the perusal of these small productions, which are scarcely to be found in that of larger works.

If we regard history, it is well known, that most political treatises have for a long time appeared in this form, and that the first relations of transactions, while they are yet the subject of conversation, divide the opinions, and employ the conjectures of mankind, are delivered by these petty writers, who have opportunities of collecting the different sentiments of disputants, of enquiring the truth from living witnesses, and of copying their representations from the life; and, therefore, they preserve a multitude of particular incidents, which are forgotten in a short time, or omitted in formal relations, and which are yet to be considered as sparks of truth, which, when united, may afford light in some of the darkest scenes of state, as, we doubt not, will be sufficiently proved in the course of this miscellany; and which it is, therefore, the interest of the publick to preserve unextinguished.

The same observation may be extended to subjects of yet more importance. In controversies that relate to the truths of religion, the first essays of reformation are generally timorous; and those, who have opinions to offer, which they expect to be opposed, produce their sentiments by degrees, and, for the most part, in small tracts: by degrees, that they may not shock their readers with too many novelties at once; and in small tracts, that they may be easily dispersed, or privately printed: almost every controversy, therefore, has been, for a time, carried on in pamphlets, nor has swelled into larger volumes, till

the first ardor of the disputants has subsided, and they have recollected their notions with coolness enough to digest them into order, consolidate them into systems, and fortify them with authorities.

From pamphlets, consequently, are to be learned the progress of every debate; the various state to which the questions have been changed; the artifices and fallacies which have been used, and the subterfuges by which reason has been eluded: in such writings may be seen how the mind has been opened by degrees, how one truth has led to another, how error has been disentangled, and hints improved to demonstration, which pleasure, and many others, are lost by him that only reads the larger writers, by whom these scattered sentiments are collected, who will see none of the changes of fortune which every opinion has passed through, will have no opportunity of remarking the transient advantages which error may sometimes obtain, by the artifices of its patron, or the successful rallies by which truth regains the day, after a repulse; but will be to him, who traces the dispute through into particular gradations, as he that hears of a victory, to him that sees the battle.

Since the advantages of preserving these small tracts are so numerous, our attempt to unite them in volumes cannot be thought either useless or unseasonable; for there is no other method of securing them from accidents; and they have already been so long neglected, that this design cannot be delayed, without hazarding the loss of many pieces, which deserve to be transmitted to another age.

The practice of publishing pamphlets on the most important subjects, has now prevailed more than

two centuries among us; and therefore it cannot be doubted, but that, as no large collections have been yet made, many curious tracts must have perished; but it is too late to lament that loss; nor ought we to reflect upon it, with any other view, than that of quickening our endeavours for the preservation of those that yet remain; of which we have now a greater number, than was, perhaps, ever amassed by any one person.

The first appearance of pamphlets among us, is generally thought to be at the new opposition raised against the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome. Those who were first convinced of the reasonableness of the new learning, as it was then called, propagated their opinions in small pieces, which were cheaply printed; and, what was then of great importance, easily concealed. These treatises were generally printed in foreign countries, and are not, therefore, always very correct. There was not then that opportunity of printing in private; for the number of printers were small, and the presses were easily overlooked by the clergy, who spared no labour or vigilance for the suppression of heresy. There is, however, reason to suspect, that some attempts were made to carry on the propagation of truth by a secret press; for one of the first treatises in favour of the Reformation, is said, at the end, to be printed at *Greenwich, by the permission of the Lord of Hosts.*

In the time of king Edward the Sixth, the presses were employed in favour of the reformed religion, and small tracts were dispersed over the nation, to reconcile them to the new forms of worship. In this

reign, likewise, political pamphlets may be said to have been begun, by the address of the rebels of Devonshire; all which means of propagating the sentiments of the people so disturbed the court, that no sooner was queen Mary resolved to reduce her subjects to the Romish superstition, but she artfully, by a charter*, granted to certain freemen of London, in whose fidelity, no doubt, she confided, intirely prohibited *all* presses, but what should be licensed by them; which charter is that by which the corporation of Stationers in London is at this time incorporated.

Under the reign of queen Elizabeth, when liberty again began to flourish, the practice of writing pamphlets became more general; presses were multiplied, and books were dispersed; and, I believe, it may properly be said, that the trade of writing began at that time, and that it has ever since gradually increased in the number, though, perhaps, not in the style of those that followed it.

In this reign was erected the first *secret* press against the church as now established, of which I have found any certain account. It was employed by the Puritans, and conveyed from one part of the nation to another, by them, as they found themselves in danger of discovery. From this press issued most of the pamphlets against Whitgift and his associates in the ecclesiastical government; and, when it was at last seized at Manchester, it was

* Which begins thus, "Know ye, that We, considering and manifestly perceiving, that several seditious and heretical books or tracts—against the faith and sound catholick doctrine of holy the church," &c.

employed upon a pamphlet called *More Work for a Cooper.*

In the peaceable reign of king James, those minds which might, perhaps, with less disturbance of the world, have been engrossed by war, were employed in controversy; and writings of all kinds were multiplied among us. The press, however, was not wholly engaged in polemical performances, for more innocent subjects were sometimes treated; and it deserves to be remarked, because it is not generally known, that the treatises of Husbandry and Agriculture, which were published about that time, are so numerous, that it can scarcely be imagined by whom they were written, or to whom they were sold.

The next reign is too well known to have been a time of confusion, and disturbance, and disputes of every kind; and the writings which were produced, bear a natural proportion to the number of questions that were discussed at that time; each party had its authors and its presses, and no endeavours were omitted to gain proselytes to every opinion. I know not whether this may not properly be called *The Age of Pamphlets;* for, though they, perhaps, may not arise to such multitudes as Mr. Rawlinson imagined, they were, undoubtedly, more numerous than can be conceived by any who have not had an opportunity of examining them.

After the Restoration, the same differences, in religious opinions, are well known to have subsisted, and the same political struggles to have been frequently renewed; and, therefore, a great number of pens were employed, on different occasions, till, at

length, all other disputes were absorbed in the popish controversy.

From the pamphlets which these different periods of time produced, it is proposed, that this Miscellany shall be compiled; for which it cannot be supposed that materials will be wanting; and, therefore, the only difficulty will be in what manner to dispose them.

Those who have gone before us, in undertakings of this kind, have ranged the pamphlets, which chance threw into their hands, without any regard either to the subject on which they treated, or the time in which they were written; a practice in no wise to be imitated by us, who want for no materials; of which we shall choose those we think best for the particular circumstances of times and things, and most instructing and entertaining to the reader.

Of the different methods which present themselves, upon the first view of the great heaps of pamphlets which the Harleian library exhibits, the two which merit most attention are, to distribute the treatises according to their subjects, or their dates; but neither of these ways can be conveniently followed. By ranging our collection in order of time, we must necessarily publish those pieces first, which least engage the curiosity of the bulk of mankind; and our design must fall to the ground, for want of encouragement, before it can be so far advanced as to obtain general regard: by confining ourselves for any long time to any single subject, we shall reduce our readers to one class; and, as we shall lose all the grace of variety, shall disgust all those [illegible]ad chiefly to be diverted. There is likewise

one objection of equal force, against both these methods, that we shall preclude ourselves from the advantage of any future discoveries; and we cannot hope to assemble at once all the pamphlets which have been written in any age, or on any subject.

It may be added, in vindication of our intended practice, that it is the same with that of Photius, whose collections are no less miscellaneous than ours; and who declares, that he leaves it to his reader, to reduce his extracts under their proper heads.

Most of the pieces which shall be offered in this collection to the publick, will be introduced by short prefaces in which will be given some account of the reasons, for which they are inserted; notes will be sometimes adjoined, for the explanation of obscure passages, or obsolete expressions; and care will be taken to mingle use and pleasure through the whole collection. Notwithstanding every subject may not be relished by every reader; yet the buyer may be assured that each number will repay his generous subscription.

A

VIEW OF THE CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

MONS. CROUSAZ AND MR. WARBURTON,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

MR. POPE's ESSAY ON MAN,

IN A LETTER TO THE

EDITOR OF THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, VOL. XIII.

MR. URBAN,

IT would not be found useless in the learned world, if in written controversies as in oral disputations, a moderator could be selected, who might in some degree superintend the debate, restrain all needless excursions, repress all personal reflections, and at last recapitulate the arguments on each side; and who, though he should not assume the province of deciding the question, might at least exhibit it in its true state.

This reflection arose in my mind upon the consideration of Mr. Crousaz's Commentary on the Essay on Man, and Mr. Warburton's Answer to it. The importance of the subject, the reputation and abilities of the controvertists, and perhaps the ardour with which each has endeavoured to support

his cause, have made an attempt of this kind necessary for the information of the greatest number of Mr. Pope's readers.

Among the duties of a moderator, I have mentioned that of recalling the disputants to the subject, and cutting off the excrescences of a debate, which Mr. Crousaz will not suffer to be long unemployed, and the repression of personal invectives which have not been very carefully avoided on either part; and are less excusable, because it has not been proved, that either the poet, or his commentator, wrote with any other design than that of promoting happiness by cultivating reason and piety.

Mr. Warburton has indeed so much depressed the character of his adversary, that before I consider the controversy between them, I think it necessary to exhibit some specimens of Mr. Crousaz's sentiments, by which it will probably be shewn, that he is far from deserving either indignation or contempt; that his notions are just, though they are sometimes introduced without necessity; and defended when they are not opposed; and that his abilities and parts are such as may entitle him to reverence from those who think his criticisms superfluous.

In page 35 of the English translation, he exhibits an observation which every writer ought to impress upon his mind, and which may afford a sufficient apology for his commentary.

On the notion of a ruling passion he offers this remark: "Nothing so much hinders men from obtaining a complete victory over their ruling passion,

as that all the advantages gained in their days of retreat, by just and sober reflections, whether struck out by their own minds, or borrowed from good books, or from the conversation of men of merit, are destroyed in a few moments by a free intercourse and acquaintance with libertines; and thus the work is always to be begun anew. A gamester resolves to leave off play, by which he finds his health impaired, his family ruined, and his passions inflamed; in this resolution he persists a few days, but soon yields to an invitation, which will give his prevailing inclination an opportunity of reviving in all its force. The case is the same with other men: but is reason to be charged with these calamities and follies, or rather the man who refuses to listen to its voice in opposition to impertinent solicitations?"

On the means recommended for the attainment of happiness, he observes, "that the abilities which our Maker has given us, and the internal and external advantages with which he has invested us, are of two very different kinds; those of one kind are bestowed in common upon us and the brute creation, but the other exalt us far above other animals. To disregard any of these gifts would be ingratitude; but to neglect those of greater excellence, to go no farther than the gross satisfactions of sense, and the functions of mere animal life, would be a far greater crime. We are formed by our Creator capable of acquiring knowledge, and regulating our conduct by reasonable rules; it is therefore our duty to cultivate our understandings, and exalt our virtues. We need

but make the experiment to find, that the greatest pleasures will arise from such endeavours.

"It is trifling to allege, in opposition to this truth, that knowledge cannot be acquired, nor virtue pursued, without toil and efforts, and that all efforts produce fatigue. God requires nothing disproportioned to the powers he has given, and in the exercise of those powers consists the highest satisfaction.

"Toil and weariness are the effects of vanity: when a man has formed a design of excelling others in merit, he is disquieted by their advances, and leaves nothing unattempted, that he may step before them: this occasions a thousand unreasonable emotions, which justly bring their punishment along with them.

"But let a man study and labour to cultivate and improve his abilities in the eye of his Maker, and with the prospect of his approbation; let him attentively reflect on the infinite value of that approbation, and the highest encomiums that men can bestow will vanish into nothing at the comparison. When we live in this manner, we find that we live for a great and glorious end.

"When this is our frame of mind, we find it no longer difficult to restrain ourselves in the gratifications of eating and drinking, the most gross enjoyments of sense. We take what is necessary to preserve health and vigour, but are not to give ourselves up to pleasures that weaken the attention, and dull the understanding."

And the true sense of Mr. Pope's assertion, that *Whatever is, is right*, and I believe the sense in

which it was written, is thus explained:—"A sacred and adorable order is established in the government of mankind. These are certain and unvaried truths: he that seeks God, and makes it his happiness to live in obedience to him, shall obtain what he endeavours after, in a degree far above his present comprehension. He that turns his back upon his Creator, neglects to obey him, and perseveres in his disobedience, shall obtain no other happiness than he can receive from enjoyments of his own procuring; void of satisfaction, weary of life, wasted by empty cares and remorses equally harassing and just, he will experience the certain consequences of his own choice. Thus will justice and goodness resume their empire, and that order be restored which men have broken."

I am afraid of wearying you or your readers with more quotations, but if you shall inform me that a continuation of my correspondence will be well received, I shall descend to particular passages, shew how Mr. Pope gave sometimes occasion to mistakes; and how Mr. Crousaz was misled by his suspicion of the system of fatality.*

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

* It does not appear that Dr. Johnson found leisure or encouragement to continue this subject any farther. C.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE

TO

THE LONDON CHRONICLE,

JANUARY 1, 1757.

IT has always been lamented, that of the little time allotted to man, much must be spent upon superfluities. Every prospect has its obstructions, which we must break to enlarge our view; every step of our progress finds impediments, which, however eager to go forward, we must stop to remove. Even those who profess to teach the way to happiness, have multiplied our incumbrances, and the author of almost every book retards his instructions by a preface.

The writers of the Chronicle hope to be easily forgiven, though they should not be free from an infection that has seized the whole fraternity, and instead of falling immediately to their subjects, should detain the reader for a time with an account of the importance of their design, the extent of their plan, and the accuracy of the method which they intend to prosecute. Such premonitions, though not always necessary when the reader has the book complete in his hand, and may find by his own eyes whatever can be found in it, yet may be more easily allowed to works published gra-

dually in successive parts, of which the scheme can only be so far known as the author shall think fit to discover it.

The Paper which we now invite the publick to add to the papers with which it is already rather wearied than satisfied, consists of many parts; some of which it has in common with other periodical sheets, and some peculiar to itself.

The first demand made by the reader of a journal is, that he should find an accurate account of foreign transactions and domestick incidents. This is always expected, but this is very rarely performed. Of those writers who have taken upon themselves the task of intelligence, some have given and others have sold their abilities, whether small or great, to one or other of the parties that divide us; and without a wish for truth or thought of decency, without care of any other reputation than that of a stubborn adherence to their abettors, carry on the same tenor of representation through all the vicissitudes of right and wrong, neither depressed by detection, nor abashed by confutation, proud of the hourly increase of infamy, and ready to boast of all the contumelies that falsehood and slander may bring upon them, as new proofs of their zeal and fidelity.

With these heroes we have no ambition to be numbered, we leave to the confessors of faction the merit of their sufferings, and are desirous to shelter ourselves under the protection of truth. That all our facts will be authentick, or all our remarks just, we dare not venture to promise: we can relate but what we hear, we can point out but what we see. Of remote transactions, the

first accounts are always confused, and commonly exaggerated: and in domestick affairs, if the power to conceal is less, the interest to misrepresent is often greater; and, what is sufficiently vexatious, truth seems to fly from curiosity, and as many enquirers produce many narratives, whatever engages the public attention is immediately disguised by the embellishments of fiction. We pretend to no peculiar power of disentangling contradiction or denuding forgery, we have no settled correspondence with the Antipodes, nor maintain any spies in the cabinets of princes. But as we shall always be conscious that our mistakes are involuntary, we shall watch the gradual discoveries of time, and retract whatever we have hastily and erroneously advanced.

In the narratives of the daily writers every reader perceives somewhat of neatness and purity wanting, which at the first view it seems easy to supply: but it must be considered, that those passages must be written in haste, and that there is often no other choice, but that they must want either novelty or accuracy; and that as life is very uniform, the affairs of one week are so like those of another, that by any attempt after variety of expression, invention would soon be wearied, and language exhausted. Some improvements however we hope to make; and for the rest we think that when we commit only common faults, we shall not be excluded from common indulgence.

The accounts of prices of corn and stocks are to most of our readers of more importance than narratives of greater sound; and as exactness is

here within the reach of diligence, our readers may justly require it from us.

Memorials of a private and personal kind, which relate deaths, marriages, and preferments, must always be imperfect by omission, and often erroneous by misinformation; but even in these there shall not be wanting care to avoid mistakes, or to rectify them whenever they shall be found.

That part of our work, by which it is distinguished from all others, is the literary journal, or account of the labours and productions of the learned. This was for a long time among the deficiencies of English literature; but as the caprice of man is always starting from too little to too much, we have now, amongst other disturbers of human quiet, a numerous body of reviewers and remarkers.

Every art is improved by the emulation of competitors; those who make no advances towards excellence, may stand as warnings against faults. We shall endeavour to avoid that petulance which treats with contempt whatever has hitherto been reputed sacred. We shall repress that elation of malignity, which wantons in the cruelties of criticism, and not only murders reputation, but murders it by torture. Whenever we feel ourselves ignorant we shall at least be modest. Our intention is not to pre-occupy judgment by praise or censure, but to gratify curiosity by early intelligence, and to tell rather what our authors have attempted, than what they have performed. The titles of books are necessarily short, and therefore disclose but imperfectly the contents; they are sometimes fraudulent and intended to raise false

expectations. In our account this brevity will be extended, and these frauds, whenever they are detected, will be exposed; for though we write without intention to injure, we shall not suffer ourselves to be made parties to deceit.

If any author shall transmit a summary of his work, we shall willingly receive it; if any literary anecdote, or curious observation, shall be communicated to us, we will carefully insert it. Many facts are known and forgotten; many observations are made and suppressed; and entertainment and instruction are frequently lost, for want of a repository in which they may be conveniently preserved.

No man can modestly promise what he cannot ascertain: we hope for the praise of knowledge and discernment, but we claim only that of diligence and candour.*

* Dr. Johnson received the humble reward of a guinea from Mr. Dodsley for this composition. C.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

WORLD DISPLAYED*.

NAVIGATION, like other arts, has been perfected by degrees. It is not easy to conceive that any age or nation was without some vessel, in which rivers might be passed by travellers, or lakes frequented by fishermen; but we have no knowledge of any ship that could endure the violence of the ocean before the ark of Noah.

As the tradition of the deluge has been transmitted to almost all the nations of the earth, it must be supposed that the memory of the means by which Noah and his family were preserved would be continued long among their descendants, and that the possibility of passing the seas could never be doubted.

What men know to be practicable, a thousand motives will incite them to try; and there is reason

* A Collection of Voyages and Travels, selected from the writers of all nations, in twenty small pocket volumes, and published by Newbery; to oblige whom, it is conjectured that Johnson drew up this curious and learned paper, which appeared in first volume, 1759.

to believe, that from the time that the generations of the post-diluvian race spread to the sea-shores, there were always navigators that ventured upon the sea, though, perhaps, not willingly beyond the sight of land.

Of the ancient voyages little certain is known, and it is not necessary to lay before the Reader such conjectures as learned men have offered to the world. The Romans, by conquering Carthage, put a stop to great part of the trade of distant nations with one another, and because they thought only on war and conquest, as their empire increased, commerce was discouraged; till under the latter emperors, ships seem to have been of little other use than to transport soldiers.

Navigation could not be carried to any great degree of certainty without the compass, which was unknown to the ancients. The wonderful quality by which a needle or small bar of steel, touched with a loadstone or magnet, and turning freely by equilibration on a point, always preserves the meridian, and directs its two ends north and south, was discovered, according to the common opinion, in 1299, by John Gola of Amalfi, a town in Italy.

From this time it is reasonable to suppose that navigation made continual, though slow improvements, which the confusion and barbarity of the times, and the want of communication between orders of men so distant as sailors and monks, hindered from being distinctly and successively recorded.

It seems, however, that the sailors still wanted either knowledge or courage, for they continued for two centuries to creep along the coast, and consi-

dered every headland as unpassable, which ran far into the sea, and against which the waves broke with uncommon agitation.

The first who is known to have formed the design of new discoveries, or the first who had power to execute his purposes, was Don Henry the Fifth, son of John, the first king of Portugal, and Philippina, sister of Henry the Fourth of England. Don Henry having attended his father to the conquest of Ceuta, obtained by conversation with the inhabitants of the continent, some accounts of the interior kingdoms and southern coast of Africa; which, though rude and indistinct, were sufficient to raise his curiosity, and convince him, that there were countries yet unknown and worthy of discovery.

He therefore equipped some small vessels, and commanded that they should pass as far as they could along the coast of Africa which looked upon the great Atlantic ocean, the immensity of which struck the gross and unskilful navigators of these times with terror and amazement. He was not able to communicate his own ardour to his seamen, who proceeded very slowly in the new attempt; each was afraid to venture much farther than he that went before him, and ten years were spent before they had advanced beyond cape Bajador, so called from its progression into the ocean, and the circuit by which it must be doubled. The opposition of this promontory to the course of the sea, produced a violent current and high waves, into which they durst not venture, and which they had not yet knowledge enough to avoid by standing off from the land into the open sea.

The prince was desirous to know something of the countries that lay beyond this formidable cape, and sent two commanders, named John Gonzales Zarco, and Tristan Vaz, in 1418, to pass beyond Badajor, and survey the coast behind it. They were caught by a tempest, which drove them out into the unknown ocean, where they expected to perish by the violence of the wind, or perhaps to wander for ever in the boundless deep. At last, in the midst of their despair, they found a small island, where they sheltered themselves, and which the sense of their deliverance disposed them to call *Puerto Santo*, or the Holy Haven.

When they returned with an account of this new island, Henry performed a public act of thanksgiving, and sent them again with seeds and cattle; and we are told by the Spanish historian, that they set two rabbits on shore, which increased so much in a few years, that they drove away the inhabitants, by destroying their corn and plants, and were suffered to enjoy the island without opposition.

In the second or third voyage to Puerto Santo (for authors do not agree which), a third captain, called Perello, was joined to the two former. As they looked round the island upon the ocean, they saw at a distance something which they took for a cloud, till they perceived that it did not change its place. They directed their course towards it, and, in 1419, discovered another island covered with trees, which they therefore called *Madera*, or the Isle of Wood.

Madera was given to Vaz or Zarco, who set fire to the woods, which are reported by Souza to have burnt for seven years together, and to have been wasted,

till want of wood was the greatest inconveniency of the place. But green wood is not very apt to burn, and the heavy rains which fall in these countries must surely have extinguished the conflagration, were it ever so violent.

There was yet little progress made upon the southern coast, and Henry's project was treated as chimerical by many of his countrymen. At last Gilianes, in 1433, passed the dreadful cape, to which he gave the name of Bajador, and came back, to the wonder of the nation.

In two voyages more, made in the two following years, they passed forty-two leagues farther, and in the latter, two men with horses being set on shore, wandered over the country, and found nineteen men, whom, according to the savage manners of that age, they attacked; the natives having javelins, wounded one of the Portuguese, and received some wounds from them. At the mouth of a river they found sea-wolves in great numbers, and brought home many of their skins, which were much esteemed.

Antonio Gonzales, who had been one of the associates of Gilianes, was sent again, in 1440, to bring back a cargo of the skins of sea-wolves. He was followed in another ship by Nunno Tristam. They were now of strength sufficient to venture upon violence; they therefore landed, and without either right or provocation, made all whom they seized their prisoners, and brought them to Portugal, with great commendations both from the prince and the nation.

Henry now began to please himself with the success of his projects, and as one of his purposes was the conversion of infidels, he thought it necessary

to impart his undertaking to the pope, and to obtain the sanction of ecclesiastical authority. To this end Fernando Lopez d'Azevedo was dispatched to Rome, who related to the pope and cardinals the great designs of Henry, and magnified his zeal for the propagation of religion. The pope was pleased with the narrative, and by a formal bull, conferred upon the crown of Portugal all the countries which should be discovered as far as India, together with India itself, and granted several privileges and indulgencies to the churches which Henry had built in his new regions, and to the men engaged in the navigation for discovery. By this bull all other princes were forbidden to encroach upon the conquests of the Portuguese, on pain of the censures incurred by the crime of usurpation.

The approbation of the pope, the sight of men whose manners and appearance were so different from those of Europeans, and the hope of gain from golden regions, which has been always the great incentive to hazard and discovery, now began to operate with full force. The desire of riches and of dominion, which yet is more pleasing to the fancy, filled the courts of the Portuguese prince with innumerable adventurers from very distant parts of Europe. Some wanted to be employed in the search after new countries, and some to be settled in those which had been already found.

Communities now began to be animated by the spirit of enterprise, and many associations were formed for the equipment of ships, and the acquisition of the riches of distant regions, which perhaps were always supposed to be more wealthy, as more

remote. These undertakers agreed to pay the prince a fifth part of the profit, sometimes a greater share, and sent out the armament at their own expense.

The city of Lagos was the first that carried on this design by contribution. The inhabitants fitted out six vessels, under the command of Lucarot, one of the prince's household, and soon after fourteen more were furnished for the same purpose, under the same commander; to those were added many belonging to private men, so that in a short time twenty-six ships put to sea in quest of whatever fortune should present.

The ships of Lagos were soon separated by foul weather, and the rest, taking each its own course, stopped at different parts of the African coast, from Cape Blanco to Cape Verd. Some of them, in 1444, anchored at Gomera, one of the Canaries, where they were kindly treated by the inhabitants, who took them into their service against the people of the isle of Palma, with whom they were at war; but the Portuguese at their return to Gomera, not being made so rich as they expected, fell upon their friends, in contempt of all the laws of hospitality and stipulations of alliance, and making several of them prisoners and slaves, set sail for Lisbon.

The Canaries are supposed to have been known, however imperfectly, to the ancients; but in the confusion of the subsequent ages they were lost and forgotten, till about the year 1340, the Biscayners found Lucarot, and invading it (for to find a new country and invade it has always been the same), brought away seventy captives, and some commodities of the place. Louis de la Cerda, count of

Clermont, of the blood royal both of France and Spain, nephew of John de la Cerda, who called himself the Prince of Fortune, had once a mind to settle in those islands, and applying himself first to the king of Arragon, and then to Clement VI. was by the pope crowned at Avignon, king of the Canaries, on condition that he should reduce them to the true religion; but the prince altered his mind, and went into France to serve against the English. The kings both of Castile and Portugal, though they did not oppose the papal grant, yet complained of it, as made without their knowledge, and in contravention of their rights.

The first settlement in the Canaries was made by John de Betancour, a French gentleman, for whom his kinsman Robin de Braquement, admiral of France, begged them, with the title of King, from Henry the magnificent of Castile, to whom he had done eminent services. John made himself master of some of the isles, but could never conquer the grand Canary; and having spent all that he had, went back to Europe, leaving his nephew, Massiot de Betancour, to take care of his new dominion. Massiot had a quarrel with the vicar-general, and was likewise disgusted by the long absence of his uncle, whom the French king detained in his service, and being able to keep his ground no longer, he transferred his rights to Don Henry, in exchange for some districts in the Madera, when he settled his family.

Don Henry, when he had purchased those islands, sent thither, in 1424, two thousand five hundred foot, and an hundred and twenty horse; but the army

was too numerous to be maintained by the country. The king of Castile afterwards claimed them, as conquered by his subjects under Betancour, and held under the crown of Castile by fealty and homage; his claim was allowed, and the Canaries were resigned.

It was the constant practice of Henry's navigators, when they stopped at a desert island, to land cattle upon it, and leave them to breed, where, neither wanting room nor food, they multiplied very fast, and furnished a very commodious supply to those who came afterwards to the same place. This was imitated in some degree by Anson, at the isle of Juan Fernandez.

The islands of Madera he not only filled with inhabitants, assisted by artificers of every kind, but procured such plants as seemed likely to flourish in that climate, and introduced sugar-canes and vines, which afterwards produced a very large revenue.

The trade of Africa now began to be profitable, but a great part of the gain arose from the sale of slaves, who were annually brought into Portugal, by hundreds, as Lafitau relates, and relates without any appearance of indignation or compassion; they likewise imported gold dust in such quantities, that Alphonsus V. coined it into a new species of money called Crusades, which is still continued in Portugal.

In time they made their way along the south coast of Africa, eastward to the country of the negroes, whom they found living in tents, without any political institutions, supporting life, with very little labour, by the milk of their kine, and millet, to which those who inhabited the coast added fish dried

in the sun. Having never seen the natives or heard of the arts of Europe, they gazed with astonishment on the ships when they approached their coasts, sometimes thinking them birds, and sometimes fishes, according as their sails were spread or lowered; and sometimes conceiving them to be only phantoms, which played to and fro in the ocean. Such is the account given by the historian, perhaps with too much prejudice against a negroe's understanding; who though he might well wonder at the bulk and swiftness of the first ship, would scarcely conceive it to be either a bird or a fish; but having seen many bodies floating in the water, would think it what it really is, a large boat; and if he had no knowledge of any means by which separate pieces of timber may be joined together, would form very wild notions concerning its construction, or perhaps suppose it to be a hollow trunk of a tree, from some country where trees grow to a much greater height and thickness than in his own.

When the Portuguese came to land, they increased the astonishment of the poor inhabitants, who saw men clad in iron, with thunder and lightning in their hands. They did not understand each other, and signs are a very imperfect mode of communication even to men of more knowledge than the negroes, so that they could not easily negociate or traffick: at last the Portuguese laid hands on some of them to carry them home for a sample; and their dread and amazement was raised, says Lafitau, to the highest pitch, when the Europeans fired their cannons and muskets among them, and they saw their companions fall dead at their feet, without any enemy at hand, or any visible cause of their destruction.

On what occasion, or for what purpose, cannons and muskets were discharged among a people harmless and secure, by strangers who without any right visited their coast, it is not thought necessary to inform us. The Portuguese could fear nothing from them, and had therefore no adequate provocation; nor is there any reason to believe but that they murdered the negroes in wanton merriment, perhaps only to try how many a volley would destroy, or what would be the consternation of those that should escape. We are openly told, that they had the less scruple concerning their treatment of the savage people, because they scarcely considered them as distinct from beasts; and indeed the practice of all the European nations, and among others of the English barbarians that cultivate the southern islands of America, proves, that this opinion, however absurd and foolish, however wicked and injurious, still continues to prevail. Interest and pride harden the heart, and it is in vain to dispute against avarice and power.

By these practices the first discoverers alienated the natives from them; and whenever a ship appeared, every one that could fly betook himself to the mountains and the woods, so that nothing was to be got more than they could steal: they sometimes surprised a few fishers, and made them slaves, and did what they could to offend the negroes, and enrich themselves. This practice of robbery continued till some of the negroes who had been enslaved learned the language of Portugal, so as to be able to interpret for their countrymen, and one John Fernandez applied himself to the negroe tongue.

From this time began something like a regular

traffick, such as can subsist between nations where all the power is on one side; and a factory was settled in the isle of Arguin, under the protection of a fort. The profit of this new trade was assigned for a certain term to Ferdinando Gomez; which seems to be the common method of establishing a trade that is yet too small to engage the care of a nation, and can only be enlarged by that attention which is bestowed by private men upon private advantage. Gomez continued the discoveries to Cape Catharine, two degrees and a half beyond the line.

In the latter part of the reign of Alphonso V. the ardour of discovery was somewhat intermitted, and all commercial enterprises were interrupted by the wars in which he was engaged with various success. But John II, who succeeded, being fully convinced both of the honour and advantage of extending his dominions in countries hitherto unknown, prosecuted the designs of prince Henry with the utmost vigour, and in a short time added to his other titles, that of king of Guinea and of the coast of Africa.

In 1463, in the third year of the reign of John II. died prince Henry, the first encourager of remote navigation, by whose incitement, patronage, and example, distant nations have been made acquainted with each other, unknown countries have been brought into general view, and the power of Europe has been extended to the remotest parts of the world. What mankind has lost and gained by the genius and designs of this prince, it would be long to compare, and very difficult to estimate. Much knowledge has been acquired, and much cruelty been committed; the belief of religion has been very little

propagated, and its laws have been outrageously and enormously violated. The Europeans have scarcely visited any coast, but to gratify avarice, and extend corruption; to arrogate dominion without right, and practise cruelty without incentive. Happy had it then been for the oppressed, if the designs of Henry had slept in his bosom, and surely more happy for the oppressors. But there is reason to hope that out of so much evil good may sometimes be produced; and that the light of the gospel will at last illuminate the sands of Africa, and the desarts of America, though its progress cannot but be slow, when it is so much obstructed by the lives of Christians.

The death of Henry did not interrupt the progress of king John, who was very strict in his injunctions, not only to make discoveries, but to secure possession of the countries that were found. The practice of the first navigators was only to raise a cross upon the coast, and to carve upon trees the device of Don Henry, the name which they thought it proper to give to the new coast, and any other information, for those that might happen to follow them; but now they began to erect piles of stone with a cross on the top, and engraved on the stone the arms of Portugal, the name of the king, and of the commander of the ship, with the day and year of the discovery. This was accounted sufficient to prove their claim to the new lands; which might be pleaded with justice enough against any other Europeans, and the rights of the original inhabitants were never taken into notice. Of these stone records, nine more were erected in the reign of king John, along the coast of Africa, as far as the Cape of Good Hope.

The fortress in the isle of Arguin was finished, and it was found necessary to build another at S. Georgio de la Mina, a few degrees north of the line, to secure the trade of gold dust, which was chiefly carried on at that place. For this purpose a fleet was fitted out of ten large and three smaller vessels, freighted with materials for building the fort, and with provisions and ammunition for six hundred men, of whom one hundred were workmen and labourers. Father Lafitau relates, in very particular terms, that these ships carried hewn stones, bricks, and timber, for the fort, so that nothing remained but barely to erect it. He does not seem to consider how small a fort could be made out of the lading of ten ships.

The command of this fleet was given to Don Diego d'Azambue, who set sail December 11, 1481, and reaching La Mina January 19, 1482, gave immediate notice of his arrival to Caramansa, a petty prince of that part of the country, whom he very earnestly invited to an immediate conference.

Having received a message of civility from the negroe chief, he landed, and chose a rising ground, proper for his intended fortress, on which he planted a banner with the arms of Portugal, and took possession in the name of his master. He then raised an altar at the foot of a great tree, on which mass was celebrated, the whole assembly, says Lafitau, breaking out into tears of devotion at the prospect of inviting these barbarous nations to the profession of the true faith. Being secure of the goodness of the end, they had no scruple about the means, nor ever considered how differently from the primi-

tive martyrs and apostles they were attempting to make proselytes. The first propagators of Christianity recommended their doctrines by their sufferings and virtues; they entered no defenceless territories with swords in their hands; they built no forts upon ground to which they had no right, nor polluted the purity of religion with the avarice of trade, or insolence of power.

What may still raise higher the indignation of a Christian mind, this purpose of propagating truth appears never to have been seriously pursued by any European nation; no means, whether lawful or unlawful, have been practised with diligence and perseverance for the conversion of savages. When a fort is built, and a factory established, there remains no other care than to grow rich. It is soon found that ignorance is most easily kept in subjection, and that by enlightening the mind with truth, fraud and usurpation would be made less practicable and less secure.

In a few days an interview was appointed between Caramansa and Azambue. The Portuguese uttered by his interpreter a pompous speech, in which he made the negroe prince large offers of his master's friendship, exhorting him to embrace the religion of his new ally; and told him, that as they came to form a league of friendship with him, it was necessary that they should build a fort, which might serve as a retreat from their common enemies, and in which the Portuguese might be always at hand to lend him assistance.

The negroe, who seemed very well to understand what the admiral intended, after a short pause, returned an answer full of respect to the king

of Portugal, but appeared a little doubtful what to determine with relation to the fort. The commander saw his diffidence, and used all his art of persuasion to overcome it. Caramansa, either induced by hope, or constrained by fear, either desirous to make them friends, or not daring to make them enemies, consented, with a shew of joy, to that which it was not in his power to refuse; and the new comers began the next day to break the ground for the foundation of a fort.

Within the limit of their intended fortification were some spots appropriated to superstitious practices; which the negroes no sooner perceived in danger of violation by the spade and pick-ax, than they ran to arms, and began to interrupt the work. The Portuguese persisted in their purpose, and there had soon been tumult and bloodshed, had not the admiral, who was at a distance to superintend the unlading the materials for the edifice, been informed of the danger. He was told at the same time, that the support of their superstition was only a pretence, and that all their rage might be appeased by the presents which the prince expected, the delay of which had greatly offended him.

The Portuguese admiral immediately ran to his men, prohibited all violence, and stopped the commotion; he then brought out the presents, and spread them with great pomp before the prince; if they were of no great value, they were rare, for the negroes had never seen such wonders before; they were therefore received with extasy, and prehaps the Portuguese derided them for their fondness of trifles, without considering how many things

derive their value only from their scarcity; and that gold and rubies would be trifles, if nature had scattered them with less frugality.

The work was now peaceably continued, and such was the diligence with which the strangers hastened to secure the possession of the country, that in twenty days they had sufficiently fortified themselves against the hostility of the negroes. They then proceeded to complete their design. A church was built in the place where the first altar had been raised, on which a mass was established to be celebrated for ever once a day, for the repose of the soul of Henry, the first mover of these discoveries.

In this fort the admiral remained with sixty soldiers, and sent back the rest in the ships, with gold, slaves, and other commodities. It may be observed that slaves were never forgotten, and that wherever they went, they gratified their pride, if not their avarice, and brought some of the natives, when it happened that they brought nothing else.

The Portuguese endeavoured to extend their dominions still farther. They had gained some knowledge of the Jaloffs, a nation inhabiting the coast of Guinea, between the Gambia and Senegal. The king of the Jaloffs being vicious and luxurious, committed the care of the government to Bemoin, his brother by the mother's side, in preference to two other brothers by his father. Bemoin, who wanted neither bravery nor prudence, knew that his station was invidious and dangerous, and therefore made an alliance with the Portuguese, and retained them in his defence by liberality and kindness. At last the king was killed by the con-

trivance of his brothers, and Bemoin was to lose his power, or maintain it by war.

He had recourse in this exigence to his great ally the king of Portugal, who promised to support him, on condition that he should become a christian, and sent an ambassador, accompanied with missionaries. Bemoin promised all that was required, objecting only, that the time of a civil war was not a proper season for a change of religion, which would alienate his adherents; but said, that when he was once peaceably established, he would not only embrace the true religion himself, but would endeavour the conversion of the kingdom.

This excuse was admitted, and Bemoin delayed his conversion for a year, renewing his promise from time to time. But the war was unsuccessful, trade was at a stand, and Bemoin was not able to pay the money which he had borrowed of the Portuguese merchants, who sent intelligence to Lisbon of his delays, and received an order from the king, commanding them, under severe penalties, to return home.

Bemoin here saw his ruin approaching, and, hoping that money would pacify all resentment, borrowed of his friends a sum sufficient to discharge his debts; and finding that even this enticement would not delay the departure of the Portuguese, he embarked his nephew in their ships, with an hundred slaves, whom he presented to the king of Portugal, to solicit his assistance. The effect of this embassy he could not stay to know; for being soon after deposed, he sought shelter in the fortress of Arguin,

whence he took shipping for Portugal, with twenty-five of his principal followers.

The king of Portugal pleased his own vanity and that of his subjects, by receiving him with great state and magnificence, as a mighty monarch who had fled to an ally for succour in misfortune. All the lords and ladies of the court were assembled, and Bemoin was conducted with a splendid attendance into the hall of audience, where the king rose from his throne to welcome him. Bemoin then made a speech with great ease and dignity, representing his unhappy state, and imploring the favour of his powerful ally. The king was touched with his affliction, and struck by his wisdom.

The conversion of Bemoin was much desired by the king; and it was therefore immediately proposed to him that he should become a christian. Ecclesiasticks were sent to instruct him; and having now no more obstacles from interest, he was easily persuaded to declare himself whatever would please those on whom he now depended. He was baptized on the third day of December 1489, in the palace of the queen, with great magnificence, and named John after the king.

Some time was spent in feasts and sports on this great occasion, and the negroes signalised themselves by many feats of agility, far surpassing the power of Europeans, who having more helps of art, are less diligent to cultivate the qualities of nature. In the mean time twenty large ships were fitted out, well manned, stored with ammunition, and laden with materials necessary for the erection of a fort. With this powerful armament were sent a great number of

missionaries under the direction of Alvarez the king's confessor. The command of this force, which filled the coast of Africa with terror, was given to Pedro Vaz d'Acugna, surnamed Bisagu; who soon after they had landed, not being well pleased with his expedition, put an end to its inconveniencies by stabbing Bemoin suddenly to the heart. The king heard of this outrage with great sorrow, but did not attempt to punish the murderer.

The king's concern for the restoration of Bemoin was not the mere effect of kindness, he hoped by his help to facilitate greater designs. He now began to form hopes of finding a way to the East Indies, and of enriching his country by that gainful commerce: this he was encouraged to believe practicable, by a map which the Moors had given to prince Henry, and which subsequent discoveries have shewn to be sufficiently near to exactness, where a passage round the south-east part of Africa was evidently described.

The king had another scheme yet more likely to engage curiosity, and not irreconcileable with his interest. The world had for some time been filled with the report of a powerful christian prince called Prester John, whose country was unknown, and whom some, after Paulus Venetus, supposed to reign in the midst of Asia, and others in the depth of Ethiopia, between the ocean and Red-sea. The account of the African christians was confirmed by some Abyssinians who had travelled into Spain, and by some friars that had visited the holy land; and the king was extremely desirous of their correspondence and alliance.

Some obscure intelligence had been obtained, which made it seem probable that a way might be found from the countries lately discovered, to those of this far-famed monarch. In 1486, an ambassador came from the king of Bemin, to desire that preachers might be sent to instruct him and his subjects in the true religion. He related that in the inland country, three hundred and fifty leagues eastward from Bemin, was a mighty monarch called Ogane, who had jurisdiction both spiritual and temporal over other kings; that the king of Bemin and his neighbours, at their accession, sent ambassadors to him with rich presents, and received from him the investiture of their dominions, and the marks of sovereignty, which were a kind of sceptre, a helmet, and a latten cross, without which they could not be considered as lawful kings; that this great prince was never seen but on the day of audience, and then held out one of his feet to the ambassador, who kissed it with great reverence, and who at his departure had a cross of latten hung on his neck, which ennobled him thenceforward, and exempted him from all servile offices.

Bemoin had likewise told the king, that to the east of the kingdom of Tombut, there was among other princes, one that was neither Mahometan nor idolater, but who seemed to profess a religion nearly resembling the christian. These informations compared with each other, and with the current accounts of Prester John, induced the king to an opinion, which, though formed somewhat at hazard, is still believed to be right, that by passing up the river Senegal his dominions would be found. It was there-

fore ordered that when the fortress was finished, an attempt should be made to pass upward to the source of the river. The design failed then, and has never yet succeeded.

Other ways likewise were tried of penetrating to the kingdom of Prester John, for the king resolved to leave neither sea nor land unsearched till he should be found. The two messengers who were sent first on this design, went to Jerusalem, and then returned, being persuaded that, for want of understanding the language of the country, it would be vain or impossible to travel farther. Two more were then dispatched, one of whom was Pedro de Covillan, the other Alphonso de Paiva; they passed from Naples to Alexandria, and then travelled to Cairo, from whence they went to Aden, a town of Arabia, on the Red-sea, near its mouth. From Aden, Paiva set sail for Ethiopia, and Covillan for the Indies. Covillan visited Canavar, Calicut, and Goa in the Indies, and Sosula in the eastern Africa, thence he returned to Aden, and then to Cairo, where he had agreed to meet Paiva. At Cairo he was informed that Paiva was dead, but he met with two Portuguese Jews, one of whom had given the king an account of the situation and trade of Ormus: they brought orders to Covillan, that he should send one of them home with the journal of his travels, and go to Ormus with the other.

Covillan obeyed the orders, sending an exact account of his adventures to Lisbon, and proceeding with the other messenger to Ormus; where having made sufficient enquiry, he sent his companion homewards with the caravans that were going to Aleppo,

and embarking once more on the Red-sea, arrived in time at Abyssinia, and found the prince whom he had sought so long, and with such danger.

Two ships were sent out upon the same search, of which Bartholomew Diaz had the chief command; they were attended by a smaller vessel laden with provisions, that they might not return upon pretence of want either felt or feared.

Navigation was now brought nearer to perfection. The Portuguese claim the honour of many inventions by which the sailor is assisted, and which enable him to leave sight of land, and commit himself to the boundless ocean. Diaz had orders to proceed beyond the river Zaire, where Diego Can had stopped, to build monuments of his discoveries, and to leave upon the coasts negroe men and women well instructed, who might enquire after Prester John, and fill the natives with reverence for the Portuguese.

Diaz, with much opposition from his crew, whose mutinies he repressed, partly by softness and partly by steadiness, sailed on till he reached the utmost point of Africa, which from the bad weather that he met there, he called Cabo Tormentoso, or the Cape of Storms. He would have gone forward, but his crew forced him to return. In his way back he met the Victualler, from which he had been parted nine months before; of the nine men which were in it at the separation, six had been killed by the negroes, and of the three remaining, one died for joy at the sight of his friends. Diaz returned to Lisbon in December 1487, and gave an account of his voyage to the king, who ordered the Cape of

Storms to be called thenceforward Cabo de Buena Esperanza, or the Cape of Good Hope.

Some time before the expedition of Diaz, the river Zaire and the kingdom of Congo had been discovered by Diego Can, who found a nation of negroes who spoke a language which those that were in his ships could not understand. He landed, and the natives, whom he expected to fly like the other inhabitants of the coast, met them with confidence, and treated them with kindness; but Diego, finding that they could not understand each other, seized some of their chiefs, and carried them to Portugal, leaving some of his own people in their room to learn the language of Congo.

The negroes were soon pacified, and the Portuguese left to their mercy were well treated; and as they by degrees grew able to make themselves understood, recommended themselves, their nation, and their religion. The king of Portugal sent Diego back in a very short time with the negroes whom he had forced away; and when they were set safe on shore, the king of Congo conceived so much esteem for Diego, that he sent one of those who had returned, back again in the ship to Lisbon, with two young men dispatched as ambassadors, to desire instructors to be sent for the conversion of his kingdom.

The ambassadors were honourably received, and baptized with great pomp, and a fleet was immediately fitted out for Congo, under the command of Gonsalvo Sorza, who dying in his passage, was succeeded in authority by his nephew Roderigo.

When they came to land, the king's uncle, who commanded the province, immediately requested to be solemnly initiated into the christian religion, which was granted to him and his young son, on Easter day 1491. The father was named Manuel, and the son Antonio. Soon afterwards the king, queen, and eldest prince, received at the font the names of John, Eleanor, and Alphonso; and a war breaking out, the whole army was admitted to the rites of christianity, and then sent against the enemy. They returned victorious, but soon forgot their faith, and formed a conspiracy to restore paganism; a powerful opposition was raised by infidels and apostates, headed by one of the king's younger sons; and the missionaries had been destroyed had not Alphonso pleaded for them and for christianity.

The enemies of religion now became the enemies of Alphonso, whom they accused to his father of disloyalty. His mother, queen Eleanor, gained time by one artifice after another, till the king was calmed; he then heard the cause again, declared his son innocent, and punished his accusers with death.

The king died soon after, and the throne was disputed by Alphonso, supported by the christians, and Aquitimo his brother, followed by the infidels. A battle was fought, Aquitimo was taken and put to death, and christianity was for a time established in Congo; but the nation has relapsed into its former follies.

Such was the state of the Portuguese navigation when in 1492, Columbus made the daring and prosperous voyage which gave a new world to Euro-

pean curiosity and European cruelty. He had offered his proposal, and declared his expectations to king John of Portugal, who had slighted him as a fanciful and rash projector, that promised what he had not reasonable hopes to perform. Columbus had solicited other princes, and had been repulsed with the same indignity; at last Isabella of Arragon furnished him with ships, and having found America, he entered the mouth of the Tagus in his return, and shewed the natives of the new country. When he was admitted to the king's presence, he acted and talked with so much haughtiness, and reflected on the neglect which he had undergone with so much acrimony, that the courtiers who saw their prince insulted, offered to destroy him; but the king, who knew that he deserved the reproaches that had been used, and who now sincerely regretted his incredulity, would suffer no violence to be offered him, but dismissed him with presents and with honours.

The Portuguese and Spaniards became now jealous of each other's claim to countries which neither had yet seen; and the Pope, to whom they appealed, divided the new world between them by a line drawn from north to south, a hundred leagues westward from Cape Verd and the Azores, giving all that lies west from that line to the Spaniards, and all that lies east to the Portuguese. This was no satisfactory division, for the east and west must meet at last, but that time was then at a great distance.

According to this grant, the Portuguese continued their discoveries eastward, and became mas-

ters of much of the coast both of Africa and the Indies; but they seized much more than they could occupy, and while they were under the dominion of Spain, lost the greater part of their Indian territories.

THE

PREFACE

TO THE

PRECEPTOR:

CONTAINING

A GENERAL PLAN OF EDUCATION*.

THE importance of education is a point so generally understood and confessed, that it would be of little use to attempt any new proof or illustration of its necessity and advantages.

At a time when so many schemes of education have been projected, so many proposals offered to the publick, so many schools opened for general knowledge, and so many lectures in particular sciences attended; at a time when mankind seems intent rather upon familiarising than enlarging the several arts; and every age, sex, and profession, is invited to an acquaintance with those studies, which were formerly supposed accessible only to such as had devoted themselves to literary leisure, and dedicated their powers to philosophical enquiries; it seems rather requisite that an apology should be

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made for any further attempt to smooth a path so frequently beaten, or to recommend attainments so ardently pursued, and so officiously directed.

That this general desire may not be frustrated, our schools seem yet to want some book, which may excite curiosity by its variety, encourage diligence by its facility, and reward application by its usefulness. In examining the treatises hitherto offered to the youth of this nation, there appeared none that did not fail in one or other of these essential qualities; none that were not either unpleasing, or abstruse, or crowded with learning very rarely applicable to the purposes of common life.

Every man, who has been engaged in teaching, knows with how much difficulty youthful minds are confined to close application, and how readily they deviate to any thing, rather than attend to that which is imposed as a task. That this disposition, when it becomes inconsistent with the forms of education, is to be checked, will be readily granted; but since, though it may be in some degree obviated, it cannot wholly be suppressed, it is surely rational to turn it to advantage, by taking care that the mind shall never want objects on which its faculties may be usefully employed. It is not impossible, that this restless desire of novetly which gives so much trouble to the teacher, may be often the struggle of the understanding starting from that, to which it is not by nature adapted, and travelling in search of something on which it may fix with greater satisfaction. For without supposing each man particularly marked out by his genius for particular performances, it may be easily conceived, that

when a numerous class of boys is confined indiscriminately to the same forms of composition, the repetition of the same words, or the explication of the same sentiments, the employment must, either by nature or accident, be less suitable to some than others; that the ideas to be contemplated may be too difficult for the apprehension of one, and too obvious for that of another: they may be such as some understandings cannot reach, though others look down upon them as below their regard. Every mind in its progress through the different stages of scholastick learning, must be often in one of these conditions, must either flag with the labour, or grow wanton with the facility of the work assigned; and in either state it naturally turns aside from the track before it. Weariness looks out for relief, and leisure for employment, and surely it is rational to indulge the wanderings of both. For the faculties which are too lightly burdened with the business of the day, may with great propriety add to it some other enquiry; and he that finds himself overwearied by a task, which perhaps, with all his efforts, he is not able to perform, is undoubtedly to be justified in addicting himself rather to easier studies, and endeavouring to quit that which is above his attainment, for that which nature has not made him incapable of pursuing with advantage.

That therefore this roving curiosity may not be unsatisfied, it seems necessary to scatter in its way such allurements as may withhold it from an useless and unbounded dissipation; such as may regulate it without violence, and direct it without restraint; such as may suit every inclination, and fit every

capacity; may employ the stronger genius, by operations of reason, and engage the less active or forcible mind, by supplying it with easy knowledge, and obviating that despondence, which quickly prevails, when nothing appears but a succession of difficulties, and one labour only ceases that another may be imposed.

A book intended thus to correspond with all dispositions, and afford entertainment for minds of different powers, is necessarily to contain treatises on different subjects. As it is designed for schools, though for the higher classes, it is confined wholly to such parts of knowledge as young minds may comprehend; and as it is drawn up for readers yet unexperienced in life, and unable to distinguish the useful from the ostentatious or unnecessary parts of science, it is requisite that a very nice distinction should be made, that nothing unprofitable should be admitted for the sake of pleasure, nor any arts of attraction neglected, that might fix the attention upon more important studies.

These considerations produced the book which is here offered to the publick, as better adapted to the great design of pleasing by instruction, than any which has hitherto been admitted into our seminaries of literature. There are not indeed wanting in the world compendiums of science, but many were written at a time when philosophy was imperfect, as that of G. Valla; many contain only naked schemes, or synoptical tables, as that of Stierius; and others are too large and voluminous, as that of Alstedius; and, what is not to be considered as the least objection, they are

generally in a language, which, to boys, is more difficult than the subject; and it is too hard a task to be condemned to learn a new science in an unknown tongue. As in life, so in study, it is dangerous to do more things than one at a time; and the mind is not to be harassed with unnecessary obstructions, in a way, of which the natural and unavoidable asperity is such as too frequently produces despair.

If the language however had been the only objection to any of the volumes already extant, the schools might have been supplied at a small expence by a translation; but none could be found that was not so defective, redundant, or erroneous, as to be of more danger than use. It was necessary then to examine, whether upon every single science there was not some treatise written for the use of scholars, which might be adapted to this design, so that a collection might be made from different authors, without the necessity of writing new systems. This search was not wholly without success: for two authors were found, whose performances might be admitted with little alteration. But so widely does this plan differ from all others, so much has the state of many kinds of learning been changed, or so unfortunately have they hitherto been cultivated, that none of the other subjects were explained in such a manner as was now required; and therefore neither care nor expence has been spared to obtain new lights, and procure to this book the merit of an original.

With what judgment the design has been formed, and with what skill it has been executed, the learned world is now to determine. But before sentence

shall pass, it is proper to explain more fully what has been intended, that censure may not be incurred by the omission of that which the original plan did not comprehend; to declare more particularly who they are to whose instructions these treatises pretend, that a charge of arrogance and presumption may be obviated; to lay down the reasons which directed the choice of the several subjects; and to explain more minutely the manner in which each particular part of these volumes is to be used.

The title has already declared, that these volumes are particularly intended for the use of schools, and therefore it has been the care of the authors to explain the several sciences, of which they have treated, in the most familiar manner; for the mind used only to common expressions, and inaccurate ideas, does not suddenly conform itself to scholastick modes of reasoning, or conceive the nice distinctions of a subtile philosophy, and may be properly initiated in speculative studies by an introduction like this, in which the grossness of vulgar conception is avoided, without the observation of metaphysical exactness. It is observed, that in the course of the natural world no change is instantaneous, but all its vicissitudes are gradual and slow; the motions of intellect proceed in the like imperceptible progression, and proper degrees of transition from one study to another are therefore necessary; but let it not be charged upon the writers of this book, that they intended to exhibit more than the dawn of knowledge, or pretended to raise in the mind any nobler product than the blossoms of science, which more powerful institutions may ripen into fruit.

For this reason it must not be expected, that in the following pages should be found a complete circle of the sciences; or that any authors, now deservedly esteemed, should be rejected to make way for what is here offered. It was intended by the means of these precepts, not to deck the mind with ornaments, but to protect it from nakedness; not to enrich it with affluence, but to supply it with necessaries. The *enquiry*, therefore, was not what degrees of knowledge are desirable, but what are in most stations of life indispensably required; and the *choice* was determined not by the splendor of any part of literature, but by the extent of its use, and the inconvenience which its neglect was likely to produce.

I. The prevalence of this consideration appears in the first part, which is appropriated to the humble purposes of teaching to *read*, and *speak*, and *write letters;* an attempt of little magnificence, but in which no man needs to blush for having employed his time, if honour be estimated by use. For precepts of this kind, however neglected, extend their importance as far as men are found who communicate their thoughts one to another; they are equally useful to the highest and the lowest; they may often contribute to make ignorance less inelegant; and may it not be observed, that they are frequently wanted for the embellishment even of learning?

In order to shew the proper use of this part, which consists of various exemplifications of such differences of style as require correspondent diversities of pronunciation, it will be proper to inform the scholar, that there are in general three forms of style, each of which demands its particular mode of

elocution: the *familiar*, the *solemn*, and the *pathetick*. That in the *familiar*, he that reads is only to talk with a paper in his hand, and to indulge himself in all the lighter liberties of voice, as when he reads the common articles of a news-paper, or a cursory letter of intelligence or business. That the *solemn* style, such as that of a serious narrative, exacts an uniform steadiness of speech, equal, clear, and calm. That for the *pathetick*, such as an animated oration, it is necessary the voice be regulated by the sense, varying and rising with the passions. These rules, which are the most general, admit a great number of subordinate observations, which must be particularly adapted to every scholar; for it is observable, that though very few read well, yet every man errs in a different way. But let one remark never be omitted: inculcate strongly to every scholar the danger of copying the voice of another; an attempt which, though it has been often repeated, is always unsuccessful.

The importance of writing letters with propriety justly claims to be considered with care, since, next to the power of pleasing with his presence, every man would wish to be able to give delight at a distance. This great art should be diligently taught, the rather, because of those letters which are most useful, and by which the general business of life is transacted, there are no *examples* easily to be found. It seems the general fault of those who undertake this part of education, that they propose for the exercise of their scholars, occasions which rarely happen; such as congratulations and condolences, and neglect those without which life cannot proceed.

It is possible to pass many years without the necessity of writing panegyricks or epithalamiums; but every man has frequent occasion to state a contract, or demand a debt, or make a narrative of some minute incidents of common life. On these subjects, therefore, young persons should be taught to think justly, and write clearly, neatly, and succinctly, lest they come from school into the world without any acquaintance with common affairs, and stand idle spectators of mankind, in expectation that some great event will give them an opportunity to exert their rhetorick.

II. The second place is assigned to *geometry;* on the usefulness of which it is unnecessary to expatiate in an age when mathematical studies have so much engaged the attention of all classes of men. This treatise is one of those which have been borrowed, being a translation from the work of Mr. Le Clerc; and is not intended as more than the first initiation. In delivering the fundamental principles of *geometry*, it is necessary to proceed by slow steps, that each proposition may be fully understood before another is attempted. For which purpose it is not sufficient, that when a question is asked in the words of the book, the scholar likewise can in the words of the book return the proper answer; for this may be only an act of memory, not of understanding: it is always proper to vary the words of the question, to place the proposition in different points of view, and to require of the learner an explanation in his own terms, informing him however when they are improper. By this method the scholar will become cautious and attentive, and the master will know

with certainty the degree of his proficiency. Yet, though this rule is generally right, I cannot but recommend a precept of Pardie's, that when the student cannot be made to comprehend some particular part, it should be, for that time, laid aside, till new light shall arise from subsequent observation.

When this compendium is completely understood, the scholar may proceed to the perusal of Tacquet, afterwards of Euclid himself, and then of the modern improvers of *geometry*, such as Barrow, Keil, and Sir Isaac Newton.

III. The necessity of some acquaintance with *geography* and *astronomy* will not be disputed. If the pupil is born to the ease of a large fortune, no part of learning is more necessary to him than the knowledge of the situation of nations, on which their interests generally depend; if he is dedicated to any of the learned professions, it is scarcely possible that he will not be obliged to apply himself in some part of his life to these studies, as no other branch of literature can be fully comprehended without them; if he is designed for the arts of commerce or agriculture, some general acquaintance with these sciences will be found extremely useful to him; in a word, no studies afford more extensive, more wonderful, or more pleasing scenes; and therefore there can be no ideas impressed upon the soul, which can more conduce to its future entertainment.

In the pursuit of these sciences, it will be proper to proceed with the same gradation and caution as in geometry. And it is always of use to decorate the nakedness of science, by interspersing such observations and narratives as may amuse the mind, and ex-

cite curiosity. Thus, in explaining the state of the polar regions, it might be fit to read the narrative of the Englishmen that wintered in Greenland, which will make young minds sufficiently curious after the cause of such a length of night, and intenseness of cold; and many stratagems of the same kind might be practised to interest them in all parts of their studies, and call in their passions to animate their inquiries. When they have read this treatise, it will be proper to recommend to them Varenius's Geography, and Gregory's Astronomy.

IV. The study of *chronology* and *history* seems to be one of the most natural delights of the human mind. It is not easy to live without inquiring by what means every thing was brought into the state in which we now behold it, or without finding in the mind some desire of being informed concerning the generations of mankind that have been in possession of the world before us, whether they were better or worse than ourselves; or what good or evil has been derived to us from their schemes, practices, and institutions. These are inquiries which *history* alone can satisfy; and *history* can only be made intelligible by some knowledge of *chronology*, the science by which events are ranged in their order, and the periods of computation are settled; and which therefore assists the memory by method, and enlightens the judgment by shewing the dependence of one transaction on another. Accordingly it should be diligently inculcated to the scholar, that unless he fixes in his mind some idea of the time in which each man of eminence lived, and each action was performed, with some part of the contemporary history of the

rest of the world, he will consume his life in useless reading, and darken his mind with a crowd of unconnected events; his memory will be perplexed with distant transactions resembling one another, and his reflections be like a dream in a fever, busy and turbulent, but confused and indistinct.

The technical part of chronology, or the art of computing and adjusting time, as it is very difficult, so it is not of absolute necessity, but should however be taught, so far as it can be learned without the loss of those hours which are required for attainments of nearer concern. The student may join with this treatise Le Clerc's Compendium of History; and afterwards may, for the historical part of chronology, procure Helvicus's and Isaacson's Tables; and, if he is desirous of attaining the technical part, may first peruse Holder's Account of Time, Hearne's Ductor Historicus, Strauchius, the first part of Petavius's Rationarium Temporum; and at length Scaliger de Emendatione Temporum. And for instruction in the method of his historical studies, he may consult Hearne's Ductor Historicus, Wheare's Lectures, Rawlinson's Directions for the Study of History; and for ecclesiastical history, Cave and Dupin, Baronius and Fleury.

V. *Rhetorick* and *poetry* supply life with its highest intellectual pleasures; and in the hands of virtue are of great use for the impression of just sentiments, and recommendation of illustrious examples. In the practice of these great arts, so much more is the effect of nature than the effect of education, that nothing is attempted here but to teach the mind some general heads of observation,

to which the beautiful passages of the best writers may commonly be reduced. In the use of this it is not proper that the teacher should confine himself to the examples before him; for by that method he will never enable his pupils to make just application of the rules; but, having inculcated the true meaning of each figure, he should require them to exemplify it by their own observations, pointing to them the poem, or, in longer works, the book or canto in which an example may be found, and leaving them to discover the particular passage by the light of the rules which they have lately learned.

For a farther progress in these studies, they may consult Quintilian and Vossius's Rhetorick; the art of poetry will be best learned from Bossu and Bohours in French, together with Dryden's Essays and Prefaces, the critical Papers of Addison, Spence on Pope's Odyssey, and Trapp's Prælectiones Poeticæ; but a more accurate and philosophical account is expected from a commentary upon Aristotle's Art of Poetry, with which the literature of this nation will be in a short time augmented.

VI. With regard to the practice of *drawing*, it is not necessary to give any directions, the use of the treatise being only to teach the proper method of imitating the figures which are annexed. It will be proper to incite the scholars to industry, by shewing in other books the use of the art, and informing them how much it assists the apprehension, and relieves the memory; and if they are obliged sometimes to *write* descriptions of engines, utensils, or any complex pieces of workmanship, they will more fully apprehend the necessity of an expedient which

so happily supplies the defects of language, and enables the eye to conceive what cannot be conveyed to the mind any other way. When they have read this treatise, and practised upon these figures, their theory may be improved by the Jesuit's Perspective, and their manual operations by other figures which may be easily procured.

VII. *Logick*, or the art of arranging and connecting ideas, of forming and examining arguments, is universally allowed to be an attainment in the utmost degree worthy the ambition of that being whose highest honour is to be endued with reason; but it is doubted whether that ambition has yet been gratified, and whether the powers of ratiocination have been much improved by any systems of art, or methodical institutions. The *logick* which for so many ages kept possession of the schools, has at last been condemned as a mere art of wrangling, of very little use in the pursuit of truth; and later writers have contented themselves with giving an account of the operations of the mind, marking the various stages of her progress, and giving some general rules for the regulation of her conduct. The method of these writers is here followed; but without a servile adherence to any, and with endeavours to make improvements upon all. This work, however laborious, has yet been fruitless, if there be truth in an observation very frequently made, that logicians out of the school do not reason better than men unassisted by those lights which their science is supposed to bestow. It is not to be doubted but that logicians may be sometimes overborne by their passions, or blinded by their prejudices; and that a man may reason ill,

as he may act ill, not because he does not know what is right, but because he does not regard it; yet it is no more the fault of his art that it does not direct him when his attention is withdrawn from it, than it is the defect of his sight that he misses his way when he shuts his eyes. Against this cause of error there is no provision to be made, otherwise than by inculcating the value of truth, and the necessity of conquering the passions. But *logick* may likewise fail to produce its effects upon common occasions, for want of being frequently and familiarly applied, till its precepts may direct the mind imperceptibly, as the fingers of a musician are regulated by his knowledge of the tune. This readiness of recollection is only to be procured by frequent impression; and therefore it will be proper, when *logick* has been once learned, the teacher take frequent occasion, in the most easy and familiar conversation, to observe when its rules are preserved, and when they are broken; and that afterwards he read no authors, without exacting of his pupil an account of every remarkable exemplification or breach of the laws of reasoning.

When this system has been digested, if it be thought necessary to proceed farther in the study of method, it will be proper to recommend Crousaz, Watts, Le Clerc, Wolfius, and Locke's Essay on Human Understanding; and if there be imagined any necessity of adding the peripatetick logick, which has been perhaps condemned without a candid trial, it will be convenient to proceed to Sanderson, Wallis, Crackanthorp, and Aristotle.

VIII. To excite a curiosity after the works of God, is the chief design of the small specimen of

natural history inserted in this collection; which, however, may be sufficient to put the mind in motion, and in some measure to direct its steps; but its effects may easily be improved by a philosophick master, who will every day find a thousand opportunities of turning the attention of his scholars to the contemplation of the objects that surround them, of laying open the wonderful art with which every part of the universe is formed, and the providence which governs the vegetable and animal creation. He may lay before them the Religious Philosopher, Ray, Derham's Physico-Theology, together with the Spectacle de la Nature; and in time recommend to their perusal Rondoletius and Aldrovandus.

IX. But how much soever the reason may be strengthened by logick, or the conceptions of the mind enlarged by the study of nature, it is necessary the man be not suffered to dwell upon them so long as to neglect the study of himself, the knowledge of his own station in the ranks of being, and his various relations to the innumerable multitudes which surround him, and with which his Maker has ordained him to be united for the reception and communication of happiness. To consider these aright is of the greatest importance, since from these arise duties which he cannot neglect. *Ethicks*, or *morality*, therefore, is one of the studies which ought to begin with the first glimpse of reason, and only end with life itself. Other acquisitions are merely temporary benefits, except as they contribute to illustrate the knowledge, and confirm the practice of morality and piety, which extend their influence beyond the grave,

and increase our happiness through endless duration.

This great science, therefore, must be inculcated with care and assiduity, such as its importance ought to incite in reasonable minds; and for the prosecution of this design, fit opportunities are always at hand. As the importance of logick is to be shewn by detecting false arguments, the excellence of *morality* is to be displayed by proving the deformity, the reproach, and the misery of all deviations from it. Yet it is to be remembered, that the laws of mere morality are no coercive power; and, however they may by conviction of their fitness please the reasoner in the shade, when the passions stagnate without impulse, and the appetites are secluded from their objects, they will be of little force against the ardour of desire, or the vehemence of rage, amidst the pleasures and tumults of the world. To counteract the power of temptations, hope must be excited by the prospect of rewards and fear by the expectation of punishment; and virtue may owe her panegyricks to morality, but must derive her authority from religion.

When therefore the obligations of morality are taught, let the sanctions of christianity never be forgotten; by which it will be shewn, that they give strength and lustre to each other; religion will appear to be the voice of reason, and morality the will of GOD. Under this article must be recommended Tully's Offices, Grotius, Puffendorf, Cumberland's Laws of Nature, and the excellent Mr. Addison's Moral and Religious Essays.

X. Thus far the work is composed for the use of scholars, merely as they are men. But it was thought necessary to introduce something that might be particularly adapted to that country for which it is designed; and therefore a discourse has been added upon *trade* and *commerce*, of which it becomes every man of this nation to understand at least the general principles, as it is impossible that any should be high or low enough not to be in some degree affected by their declension or prosperity. It is therefore necessary that it should be universally known among us, what changes of property are advantageous, or when the balance of trade is on our side: what are the products or manufactures of other countries; and how far one nation may in any species of traffick obtain or preserve superiority over another. The theory of trade is yet but little understood, and therefore the practice is often without real advantage to the publick; but it might be carried on with more general success, if its principles were better considered; and to excite that attention is our chief design. To the perusal of this book may succeed that of Mun upon foreign Trade, Sir Josiah Child, Locke upon Coin, Davenant's treatises, the British Merchant, Dictionnaire de Commerce, and, for an abstract or compendium, Gee, and an improvement that may hereafter be made upon his plan.

XI. The principles of *laws* and *government* come next to be considered; by which men are taught to whom obedience is due, for what it is paid, and in what degree it may be justly required. This knowledge, by peculiar necessity, constitutes a part of

the education of an Englishman, who professes to obey his prince according to the law, and who is himself a secondary legislator, as he gives his consent, by his representative, to all the laws by which he is bound, and has a right to petition the great council of the nation, whenever he thinks they are deliberating upon an act detrimental to the interest of the community. This is therefore a subject to which the thoughts of a young man ought to be directed; and that he may obtain such knowledge as may qualify him to act and judge as one of a free people, let him be directed to add to this introduction Fortescue's Treatises, N. Bacon's Historical Discourse on the Laws and Government of England, Temple's Introduction, Locke on Government, Zouch's Elementa Juris Civilis, Plato Redivivus, Gurdon's History of Parliaments, and Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity.

XII. Having thus supplied the young student with knowledge, it remains now that he learns its application; and that thus qualified to act his part, he be at last taught to chuse it. For this purpose a section is added upon *human life* and *manners;* in which he is cautioned against the danger of indulging his *passions*, of vitiating his *habits*, and depraving his *sentiments*. He is instructed in these points by three fables, two of which were of the highest authority in the ancient Pagan world. But at this he is not to rest; for if he expects to be wise and happy, he must diligently study the SCRIPTURES of GOD.

Such is the book now proposed, as the first initiation into the knowledge of things, which has

been thought by many to be too long delayed in the present forms of education. Whether the complaints be not often ill-grounded, may perhaps be disputed; but it is at least reasonable to believe, that greater proficiency might sometimes be made; that real knowledge might be more early communicated; and that children might be allowed, without injury to health, to spend many of those hours upon useful employments, which are generally lost in idleness and play; therefore the publick will surely encourage an experiment, by which, if it fails, nobody is hurt; and if it succeeds, all the future ages of the world may find advantage; which may eradicate or prevent vice, by turning to a better use those moments in which it is learned or indulged; and in some sense lengthen life, by teaching posterity to enjoy those years which have hitherto been lost. The success, and even the trial of this experiment, will depend upon those to whom the care of our youth is committed; and a due sense of the importance of their trust will easily prevail upon them to encourage a work which pursues the design of improving education. If any part of the following performance shall upon trial be found capable of amendment; if any thing can be added or altered, so as to render the attainment of knowledge more easy; the Editor will be extremely obliged to any gentleman, particularly those who are engaged in the business of teaching, for such hints or observations as may tend towards the improvement, and will spare neither expence nor trouble in making the best use of their information.

PREFACE

TO

ROLT'S DICTIONARY *.

No expectation is more fallacious than that which authors form of the reception which their labours will find among mankind. Scarcely any man publishes a book, whatever it be, without believing that he has caught the moment when the publick attention is vacant to his call, and the world is disposed in a particular manner to learn the art which he undertakes to teach.

The writers of this volume are not so far exempt from epidemical prejudices, but that they likewise please themselves with imagining, that they have reserved their labours to a propitious conjuncture, and that this is the proper time for the publication of a Dictionary of Commerce.

The predictions of an author are very far from infallibility; but in justification of some degree of con-

* A new Dictionary of Trade and Commerce, compiled from the Information of the most eminent Merchants, and from the Works of the best Writers on commercial Subjects in all Languages, by Mr. Rolt. Folio, 1757.

fidence it may be properly observed, that there was never from the earliest ages a time in which trade so much engaged the attention of mankind, or commercial gain was sought with such general emulation. Nations which have hitherto cultivated no art but that of war, nor conceived any means of encreasing riches but by plunder, are awakened to more inoffensive industry. Those whom the possession of subterraneous treasures have long disposed to accommodate themselves by foreign industry, are at last convinced that idleness never will be rich. The merchant is now invited to every port, manufactures are established in all cities, and princes who just can view the sea from some single corner of their dominions, are enlarging harbours, erecting mercantile companies, and preparing to traffick in the remotest countries.

Nor is the form of this work less popular than the subject. It has lately been the practice of the learned to range knowledge by the alphabet, and publish dictionaries of every kind of literature. This practice has perhaps been carried too far by the force of fashion. Sciences, in themselves systematical and coherent, are not very properly broken into such fortuitous distributions. A dictionary of arithmetick or geometry can serve only to confound; but commerce, considered in its whole extent, seems to refuse any other method of arrangement, as it comprises innumerable particulars unconnected with each other, among which there is no reason why any should be first or last, better than is furnished by the letters that compose their names.

We cannot indeed boast ourselves the inventors of a scheme so commodious and comprehensive. The

French, among innumerable projects for the promotion of traffick, have taken care to supply their merchants with a *Dictionnaire de Commerce*, collected with great industry and exactness, but too large for common use, and adapted to their own trade. This book, as well as others, has been carefully consulted, that our merchants may not be ignorant of any thing known by their enemies or rivals.

Such indeed is the extent of our undertaking, that it was necessary to solicit every information, to consult the living and the dead. The great qualification of him that attempts a work thus general is diligence of enquiry. No man has opportunity or ability to acquaint himself with all the subjects of a commercial dictionary, so as to describe from his own knowledge, or assert on his own experience. He must therefore often depend upon the veracity of others, as every man depends in common life, and have no other skill to boast than that of selecting judiciously, and arranging properly.

But to him who considers the extent of our subject, limited only by the bounds of nature and of art, the task of selection and method will appear sufficient to overburden industry and distract attention. Many branches of commerce are subdivided into smaller and smaller parts, till at last they become so minute as not easily to be noted by observation. Many interests are so woven among each other as not to be disentangled without long enquiry; many arts are industriously kept secret, and many practices necessary to be known, are carried on in parts too remote for intelligence.

But the knowledge of trade is of so much impor-

tance to a maritime nation, that no labour can be thought great by which information may be obtained; and therefore we hope the reader will not have reason to complain, that, of what he might justly expect to find, any thing is omitted.

To give a detail or analysis of our work is very difficult; a volume intended to contain whatever is requisite to be known by every trader, necessarily becomes so miscellaneous and unconnected as not to be easily reducible to heads; yet, since we pretend in some measure to treat of traffick as a science, and to make that regular and systematical which has hitherto been to a great degree fortuitous and conjectural, and has often succeeded by chance rather than by conduct, it will be proper to shew that a distribution of parts has been attempted, which, though rude and inadequate, will at least preserve some order, and enable the mind to take a methodical and successive view of this design.

In the dictionary which we here offer to the publick, we propose to exhibit the *materials*, the *places*, and the *means* of traffick.

The materials or subjects of traffick are *whatever is bought and sold*, and include therefore every manufacture of art, and almost every production of nature.

In giving an account of the commodities of nature, whether those which are to be used in their original state, as drugs and spices, or those which become useful when they receive a new form from human art, as flax, cotton, and metals, we shall shew the places of their production, the manner in which they grow, the art of cultivating or collect-

ing them, their discriminations and varieties, by which the best sorts are known from the worse, and genuine from fictitious, the arts by which they are counterfeited, the casualties by which they are impaired, and the practices by which the damage is palliated or concealed. We shall likewise shew their virtues and uses, and trace them through all the changes which they undergo.

The history of manufactures is likewise delivered. Of every artificial commodity the manner in which it is made is in some measure described, though it must be remembered, that manual operations are scarce to be conveyed by any words to him that has not seen them. Some general notions may however be afforded: it is easy to comprehend, that plates of iron are formed by the pressure of rollers, and bars by the strokes of a hammer; that a cannon is cast, and that an anvil is forged. But as it is to most traders of more use to know when their goods are well wrought, than by what means, care has been taken to name the places where every manufacture has been carried furthest, and the marks by which its excellency may be ascertained.

By the *places of trade* are understood all ports, cities, or towns, where staples are established, manufactures are wrought, or any commodities are bought and sold advantageously. This part of our work includes an enumeration of almost all the remarkable places in the world, with such an account of their situation, customs, and products, as the merchant would require, who being to begin a new trade in any foreign country, was yet ignorant of

the commodities of the place, and the manners of the inhabitants.

But the chief attention of the merchant, and consequently of the author who writes for merchants, ought to be employed upon the *means* of trade, which include all the knowledge and practice necessary to the skilful and successful conduct of commerce.

The first of the means of trade is proper education, which may confer a competent skill in numbers; to be afterwards completed in the counting-house, by observation of the manner of stating accounts, and regulating books, which is one of the few arts which having been studied in proportion to its importance, is carried as far as use can require. The counting-house of an accomplished merchant is a school of method, where the great science may be learned of ranging particulars under generals, of bringing the different parts of a transaction together, and of shewing at one view a long series of dealing and exchange. Let no man venture into large business while he is ignorant of the method of regulating books; never let him imagine that any degree of natural abilities will enable him to supply this deficiency, or preserve multiplicity of affairs from inextricable confusion.

This is the study, without which all other studies will be of little avail; but this alone is not sufficient. It will be necessary to learn many other things, which however may be easily included in the preparatory institutions, such as an exact knowledge of the *weights* and *measures* of different countries, and

some skill in geography and navigation, with which this book may perhaps sufficiently supply him.

In navigation, considered as part of the skill of a merchant, is included not so much the art of steering a ship, as the knowledge of the sea-coast, and of the different parts to which his cargoes are sent; the customs to be paid; the passes, permissions, or certificates to be procured; the hazards of every voyage, and the true rate of insurances. To this must be added, an acquaintance with the policies and arts of other nations, as well those to whom the commodities are sold, as of those who carry goods of the same kind to the same market; and who are therefore to be watched as rivals endeavouring to take advantage of every error, miscarriage, or debate.

The chief of the *means* of trade is *money*, of which our late refinements in traffick have made the knowledge extremely difficult. The merchant must not only inform himself of the various denominations and value of foreign coins, together with their method of counting and reducing; such as the milleries of Portugal, and the livres of France; but he must learn what is of more difficult attainment; the discount of exchanges, the nature of current paper, the principles upon which the several banks of Europe are established, the real value of funds, the true credit of trading companies, with all the sources of profit and possibilities of loss.

All this he must learn merely as a private dealer, attentive only to his own advantage; but as every man ought to consider himself as part of the community to which he belongs, and while he prosecutes his own interest to promote likewise that of his coun-

try, it is necessary for the trader to look abroad upon mankind, and study many questions which are perhaps more properly political than mercantile.

He ought therefore to consider very accurately the balance of trade, or the proportion between things exported and imported; to examine what kinds of commerce are unlawful, either as being expressly prohibited, because detrimental to the manufactures or other interest of his country, as the exportation of silver to the East-Indies, and the introduction of French commodities; or unlawful in itself, as the traffick for negroes. He ought to be able to state with accuracy, the benefits and mischiefs of monopolies, and exclusive companies; to enquire into the arts which have been practised by them to make themselves necessary, or by their opponents to make them odious. He should inform himself what trades are declining, and what are improveable; when the advantage is on our side, and when on that of our rivals.

The state of our *colonies* is always to be diligently surveyed, that no advantage may be lost which they can afford, and that every opportunity may be improved of encreasing their wealth and power, or of making them useful to their mother-country.

There is no knowledge of more frequent use than that of duties and impost, whether customs paid at the ports, or excises levied upon the manufacturer. Much of the prosperity of a trading nation depends upon duties properly apportioned; so that what is necessary may continue cheap, and what is of use only to luxury may in some measure atone to the publick for the mischief done to individuals. Du-

ties may often be so regulated as to become useful even to those that pay them; and they may be likewise so unequally imposed as to discourage honesty, and depress industry, and give temptation to fraud and unlawful practices.

To teach all this is the design of the Commercial Dictionary; which, though immediately and primarily written for the merchants, will be of use to every man of business or curiosity. There is no man who is not in some degree a merchant, who has not something to buy and something to sell, and who does not therefore want such instructions as may teach him the true value of possessions or commodities.

The descriptions of the productions of the earth and water, which this volume will contain, may be equally pleasing and useful to the speculatist with any other natural history; and the accounts of various manufactures will constitute no contemptible body of experimental philosophy. The descriptions of ports and cities may instruct the geographer as well as if they were found in books appropriated only to his own science; and the doctrines of funds, insurances, currency, monopolies, exchanges, and duties, is so necessary to the politician, that without it he can be of no use either in the council or the senate, nor can speak or think justly either on war or trade.

We therefore hope that we shall not repent the labour of compiling this work; nor flatter ourselves unreasonably, in predicting a favourable reception to a book which no condition of life can render useless, which may contribute to the advantage of all that make or receive laws, of all that buy or sell, of all

that wish to keep or improve their possessions, of all that desire to be rich, and all that desire to be wise *.

* Of this preface, Mr. Boswell informs us that Dr. Johnson said he never saw Rolt, and never read the book. "The booksellers wanted a preface to a Dictionary of Trade and Commerce. I knew very well what such a dictionary should be, and I wrote a preface accordingly." This may be believed; but the book is a most wretched farrago of articles plundered without acknowledgment, or judgment, which, indeed, was the case with most of Rolt's compilations. C.

PREFACE

TO THE TRANSLATION OF

FATHER LOBO'S VOYAGE TO ABYSSINIA.*

THE following relation is so curious and entertaining, and the dissertations that accompany it so judicious and instructive, that the translator is confident his attempt stands in need of no apology, whatever censures may fall on the performance.

The Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general vein of his countrymen, has amused his reader with no romantick absurdities or incredible fictions: whatever he relates, whether true or not, is at least probable; and he who tells nothing exceeding the bounds of probability, has a right to demand that they should believe him who cannot contradict him.

He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things as he saw them, to have copied nature from the life, and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets

* For an account of this book, see the Life of Dr. JOHNSON, by Mr. Murphy.

with no basilisks that destroy with their eyes; his crocodiles devour their prey without tears; and his cataracts fall from the rock without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants.

The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blest with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom or unceasing sunshine; nor are the nations here described either devoid of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private and social virtues: here are no Hottentots without religion, polity, or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite, and completely skilled in all sciences: he will discover what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced in most countries their particular inconveniences by particular favours.

In his account of the mission, where his veracity is most to be suspected, he neither exaggerates over-much the merits of the jesuits, if we consider the partial regard paid by the Portuguese to their countrymen, by the jesuits to their society, and by the papists to their church, nor aggravates the vices of the Abyssinians; but if the reader will not be satisfied with a popish account of a popish mission, he may have recourse to the History of the Church of Abyssinia, written by Dr. Geddes, in which he will find the actions and sufferings of the missionaries placed in a different light, though the same in which Mr. Le Grand, with all his zeal for the Roman church, appears to have seen them.

This learned dissertator, however valuable for his industry and erudition, is yet more to be esteemed for having dared so freely, in the midst of France, to declare his disapprobation of the patriarch Oviedo's sanguinary zeal, who was continually importuning the Portuguese to beat up their drums for missionaries who might preach the gospel with swords in their hands, and propagate by desolation and slaughter the true worship of the God of peace.

It is not easy to forbear reflecting with how little reason these men profess themselves the followers of JESUS, who left this great characteristick to his disciples, that they should be known by *loving one another*, by universal and unbounded charity and benevolence.

Let us suppose an inhabitant of some remote and superior region, yet unskilled in the ways of men, having read and considered the precepts of the gospel, and the example of our Saviour, to come down in search of the *true church*. If he would not enquire after it among the cruel, the insolent, and the oppressive; among those who are continually grasping at dominion over souls as well as bodies; among those who are employed in procuring to themselves impunity for the most enormous villanies, and studying methods of destroying their fellow creatures, not for their crimes but their errors—if he would not expect to meet benevolence engage in massacres, or to find mercy in a court of inquisition, he would not look for the *true church* in the church of Rome.

Mr. Le Grand has given in one dissertation an example of great moderation, in deviating from the

temper of his religion; but in the others has left proofs, that learning and honesty are often too weak to oppose prejudice. He has made no scruple of preferring the testimony of father Du Bernat to the writings of all the Portuguese jesuits, to whom he allows great zeal, but little learning, without giving any other reason than that his favourite was a Frenchman. This is writing only to Frenchmen and to papists: a protestant would be desirous to know, why he must imagine that father Du Bernat had a cooler head or more knowledge, and why one man whose account is singular, is not more likely to be mistaken than many agreeing in the same account.

If the Portuguese were biassed by any particular views, another bias equally powerful may have deflected the Frenchman from the truth; for they evidently write with contrary designs: the Portuguese, to make their mission seem more necessary, endeavoured to place in the strongest light the differences between the Abyssinian and Roman church; but the great Ludolfus, laying hold on the advantage, reduced these later writers to prove their conformity.

Upon the whole, the controversy seems of no great importance to those who believe the Holy Scriptures sufficient to teach the way of salvation; but, of whatever moment it may be thought, there are no proofs sufficient to decide it.

His discourses on indifferent subjects will divert as well as instruct; and if either in these, or in the relation of father Lobo, any argument shall appear unconvincing, or description obscure, they are defects incident to all mankind, which however, are not too rashly to be imputed to the authors, being some-

times perhaps more justly chargeable on the translator.

In this translation (if it may be so called) great liberties have been taken, which, whether justifiable or not, shall be fairly confessed, and let the judicious part of mankind pardon or condemn them.

In the first part the greatest freedom has been used, in reducing the narration into a narrow compass; so that it is by no means a translation, but an epitome, in which, whether every thing either useful or entertaining be comprised, the compiler is least qualified to determine.

In the account of Abyssinia, and the continuation, the authors have been followed with more exactness; and as few passages appeared either insignificant or tedious, few have been either shortened or omitted.

The dissertations are the only part in which an exact translation has been attempted; and even in those, abstracts are sometimes given instead of literal quotations, particularly in the first; and sometimes other parts have been contracted.

Several memorials and letters, which are printed at the end of the dissertations to secure the credit of the foregoing narrative, are entirely left out.

It is hoped that after this confession, whoever shall compare this attempt with the original, if he shall find no proofs of fraud or partiality, will candidly overlook any failure of judgment.

AN

ESSAY

ON

EPITAPHS.*

THOUGH criticism has been cultivated in every age of learning, by men of great abilities and extensive knowledge, till the rules of writing are become rather burthensome than instructive to the mind; though almost every species of composition has been the subject of particular treatises, and given birth to definitions, distinctions, precepts and illustrations; yet no critick of note, that has fallen within my observation, has hitherto thought *sepulchral inscriptions* worthy of a minute examination, or pointed out with proper accuracy their beauties and defects.

The reasons of this neglect it is useless to enquire, and perhaps impossible to discover; it might be justly expected that this kind of writing would have been the favourite topick of criticism, and that self-love might have produced some regard for it, in those authors that have crowded libraries with elaborate dissertations upon Homer; since to afford a subject for heroick poems is the privilege of very few,

* From the Gentleman's Magazine, 1740.

but every man may expect to be recorded in an epitaph, and therefore finds some interest in providing that his memory may not suffer by an unskilful panegyrick.

If our prejudices in favour of antiquity deserve to have any part in the regulation of our studies, EPITAPHS seem intitled to more than common regard, as they are probably of the same age with the art of writing. The most ancient structures in the world, the Pyramids, are supposed to be sepulchral monuments, which either pride or gratitude erected; and the same passions which incited men to such laborious and expensive methods of preserving their own memory, or that of their benefactors, would doubtless incline them not to neglect any easier means by which the same ends might be obtained. Nature and reason have dictated to every nation, that to preserve good actions from oblivion, is both the interest and duty of mankind: and therefore we find no people acquainted with the use of letters, that omitted to grace the tombs of their heroes and wise men with panegyrical inscriptions.

To examine, therefore, in what the perfection of EPITAPHS consists, and what rules are to be observed in composing them, will be at least of as much use as other critical enquiries; and for assigning a few hours to such disquisitions, great examples at least, if not strong reasons, may be pleaded.

An EPITAPH, as the word itself implies, is an *inscription on the tomb*, and in its most extensive import may admit indiscriminately satire or praise. But as malice has seldom produced monuments of defamation, and the tombs hitherto raised have been

the work of friendship and benevolence, custom has contracted the original latitude of the *word*, so that it signifies in the general acceptation an *inscription engraven on a tomb in honour of the person deceased.*

As honours are paid to the dead in order to incite others to the imitation of their excellences, the principal intention of EPITAPHS is to perpetuate the examples of virtue, that the tomb of a good man may supply the want of his presence, and veneration for his memory produce the same effect as the observation of his life. Those EPITAPHS are, therefore, the most perfect, which set virtue in the strongest light, and are best adapted to exalt the reader's ideas and rouse his emulation.

To this end it is not always necessary to recount the actions of a hero, or enumerate the writings of a philosopher; to imagine such informations necessary, is to detract from their characters, or to suppose their works mortal, or their achievements in danger of being forgotten. The bare name of such men answers every purpose of a long inscription.

Had only the name of Sir ISAAC NEWTON been subjoined to the design upon his monument, instead of a long detail of his discoveries, which no philosopher can want, and which none but a philosopher can understand, those, by whose direction it was raised, had done more honour both to him and to themselves.

This indeed is a commendation which it requires no genius to bestow, but which can never become vulgar or contemptible, if bestowed with judgment; because no single age produces many men of merit

superior to panegyrick. None but the first names can stand unassisted against the attacks of time; and if men raised to reputation by accident or caprice, have nothing but their names engraved on their tombs, there is danger lest in a few years the inscription require an interpreter. Thus have their expectations been disappointed who honoured Picus of Mirandola with this pompous epitaph.

Hic situs est PICUS MIRANDOLA, cætera norunt
Et Tagus et Ganges, forsan et Antipodes.

His name, then celebrated in the remotest corners of the earth, is now almost forgotten; and his works, then studied, admired, and applauded, are now mouldering in obscurity.

Next in dignity to the bare name is a short character simple and unadorned, without exaggeration, superlatives, or rhetorick. Such were the inscriptions in use among the Romans, in which the victories gained by their emperors were commemorated by a single epithet; as Cæsar *Germanicus*, Cæsar *Dacicus, Germanicus, Illyricus*. Such would be this epitaph, ISAACUS NEWTONUS, *naturæ legibus investigatis, hic quiescit.*

But to far the greatest part of mankind a longer encomium is necessary for the publication of their virtues, and the preservation of their memories; and in the composition of these it is that art is principally required, and precepts therefore may be useful.

In writing EPITAPHS, one circumstance is to be considered, which affects no other composition; the place in which they are now commonly found restrains them to a particular air of solemnity, and de-

bars them from the admission of all lighter or gayer ornaments. In this it is that the style of an EPITAPH necessarily differs from that of an ELEGY. The custom of burying our dead either in or near our churches, perhaps originally founded on a rational design of fitting the mind for religious exercises, by laying before it the most affecting proof of the uncertainty of life, makes it proper to exclude from our EPITAPHS all such allusions as are contrary to the doctrines for the propagation of which the churches are erected, and to the end for which those who peruse the monuments must be supposed to come thither. Nothing is, therefore, more ridiculous than to copy the Roman inscriptions, which were engraven on stones by the high-way, and composed by those who generally reflected on mortality only to excite in themselves and others a quicker relish of pleasure, and a more luxurious enjoyment of life, and whose regard for the dead extended no farther than a wish that *the earth might be light upon them.*

All allusions to the heathen mythology are therefore absurd, and all regard for the senseless remains of a dead man impertinent and superstitious. One of the first distinctions of the primitive christians, was their neglect of bestowing garlands on the dead, in which they are very rationally defended by their apologist in Minutius Felix. "We lavish no flowers nor odours on the dead," says he, "because they have no sense of fragrance or of beauty." We profess to reverence the dead, not for their sake, but for our own. It is therefore always with indignation or contempt that I read the epitaph on Cowley, a man whose learning and poetry were his lowest merits.

Aurea dum late volitant tua scripta per orbem,
Et fama eternum vivis, divine Poëta,
Hic placida jaceas requie, custodiat urnam
Cana Fides, vigilentque perenni lampade Musæ!
Sit sacer ille locus, nec quis temerarius ausit
Sacrilega turbare manu venerabile bustum.
Intacti maneant, maneant per sæcula dulces
Cowleii cineres, serventque immobile saxum.

To pray that the ashes of a friend may lie undisturbed, and that the divinities that favoured him in his life, may watch for ever round him to preserve his tomb from violation, and drive sacrilege away, is only rational in him who believes the soul interested in the repose of the body, and the powers which he invokes for its protection able to preserve it. To censure such expressions as contrary to religion, or as remains of heathen superstition, would be too great a degree of severity. I condemn them only as uninstructive and unaffecting, as too ludicrous for reverence or grief, for Christianity and a temple.

That the designs and decorations of monuments ought likewise to be formed with the same regard to the solemnity of the place, cannot be denied; it is an established principle, that all ornaments owe their beauty to their propriety. The same glitter of dress that adds graces to gaiety and youth, would make age and dignity contemptible. Charon with his boat is far from heightening the awful grandeur of the universal judgment, though drawn by Angelo himself; nor is it easy to imagine a greater absurdity than that of gracing the walls of a Christian temple with the figure of Mars

leading a hero to battle, or Cupids sporting round a virgin. The pope who defaced the statues of the deities at the tomb of Sannazarius is, in my opinion, more easily to be defended, than he that erected them.

It is for the same reason improper to address the EPITAPH to the passenger, a custom which an injudicious veneration for antiquity introduced again at the revival of letters, and which, among many others, Passeratius suffered to mislead him in his EPITAPH upon the heart of Henry king of France, who was stabbed by Clement the monk; which yet deserves to be inserted, for the sake of shewing how beautiful even improprieties may become in the hands of a good writer.

Adsta, viator, et dole regum vices.
Cor Regis isto conditur sub marmore,
Qui jura Gallis, jura Sarmatis dedit.
Tectus cucullo hunc sustulit sicarius.
Abi, viator, et dole regum vices.

In the monkish ages, however ignorant and unpolished, the EPITAPHS were drawn up with far greater propriety than can be shewn in those which more enlightened times have produced.

Orate pro Anima—miserrimi Peccatoris,

was an address to the last degree striking and solemn, as it flowed naturally from the religion then believed, and awakened in the reader sentiments of benevolence for the deceased, and of concern for his own happiness. There was nothing trifling or ludicrous, nothing that did not tend to

the noblest end, the propagation of piety and the increase of devotion.

It may seem very superfluous to lay it down as the first rule for writing EPITAPHS, that the name of the deceased is not to be omitted; nor should I have thought such a precept necessary, had not the practice of the greatest writers shewn, that it has not been sufficiently regarded. In most of the poetical EPITAPHS, the names for whom they were composed, may be sought to no purpose, being only prefixed on the monument. To expose the absurdity of this omission, it is only necessary to ask how the EPITAPHS, which have outlived the stones on which they were inscribed, would have contributed to the information of posterity, had they wanted the names of those whom they celebrated.

In drawing the character of the deceased, there are no rules to be observed which do not equally relate to other compositions. The praise ought not to be general, because the mind is lost in the extent of any indefinite idea, and cannot be affected with what it cannot comprehend. When we hear only of a good or great man, we know not in what class to place him, nor have any notion of his character, distinct from that of a thousand others; his example can have no effect upon our conduct, as we have nothing remarkable or eminent to propose to our imitation. The EPITAPH composed by Ennius for his own tomb, has both the faults last mentioned.

Nemo me decoret lacrumis, nec funera, fletu
Faxit. Cur? volito vivu' per ora virum.

The reader of this EPITAPH receives scarce any idea from it; he neither conceives any veneration for the man to whom it belongs, nor is instructed by what methods this boasted reputation is to be obtained.

Though a sepulchral inscription is professedly a panegyrick, and, therefore, not confined to historical impartiality, yet it ought always to be written with regard to truth. No man ought to be commended for virtues which he never possessed, but whoever is curious to know his faults must enquire after them in other places; the monuments of the dead are not intended to perpetuate the memory of crimes, but to exhibit patterns of virtue. On the tomb of Mæcenas his luxury is not to be mentioned with his munificence, nor is the proscription to find a place on the monument of Augustus.

The best subject for EPITAPHS is private virtue; virtue exerted in the same circumstances in which the bulk of mankind are placed, and which, therefore, may admit of many imitators. He that has delivered his country from oppression, or freed the world from ignorance and error, can excite the emulation of a very small number; but he that has repelled the temptations of poverty, and disdained to free himself from distress at the expence of his virtue, may animate multitudes, by his example, to the same firmness of heart and steadiness of resolution.

Of this kind I cannot forbear the mention of two Greek inscriptions; one upon a man whose writings are well known, the other upon a person

whose memory is preserved only in her EPITAPH, who both lived in slavery, the most calamitous estate in human life :

Ζωσιμη ἡ πριν εωσα μονω τω σωματι δωλη,
Και τω σωματι νυν ευρεν ελευθεριην.

Zosima, quæ solo fuit olim corpore serva,
Corpore nunc etiam libera facta fuit.

"ZOSIMA, who in her life could only have her body enslaved, now finds her body likewise set at liberty."

It is impossible to read this EPITAPH without being animated to bear the evils of life with constancy, and to support the dignity of human nature under the most pressing afflictions, both by the example of the heroine, whose grave we behold, and the prospect of that state in which, to use the language of the inspired writers, "The poor cease from their labours, and the weary be at rest."

The other is upon Epictetus, the Stoick philosopher :

Δωλος Επικτητος γενομην, και σωμ' αναπηρος,
Και πενιην Ιρος, και φιλος Αθανατοις.

Servus Epictetus, mutilatus corpore, vixi
Pauperieque Irus, curaque prima Deûm.

"EPICTETUS, who lies here, was a slave and a cripple, poor as the beggar in the proverb, and the favourite of Heaven."

In this distich is comprised the noblest panegyrick, and the most important instruction. We may learn from it, that virtue is impracticable in no

condition, since Epictetus could recommend himself to the regard of Heaven, amidst the temptations of poverty and slavery; slavery, which has always been found so destructive to virtue, that in many languages a slave and a thief are expressed by the same word. And we may be likewise admonished by it, not to lay any stress on a man's outward circumstances, in making an estimate of his real value, since Epictetus the beggar, the cripple, and the slave, was the favourite of Heaven.

PREFACE*

TO AN

ESSAY

ON MILTON'S USE AND IMITATION OF THE MODERNS IN HIS PARADISE LOST.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1750.

It is now more than half a century since the "Paradise Lost," having broke through the cloud with which the unpopularity of the author, for a time, obscured it, has attracted the general admiration of mankind; who have endeavoured to compensate the errour of their first neglect, by lavish praises and boundless veneration. There seems to have arisen a contest, among men of genius and literature, who

* It is to be hoped, nay, it is *expected*, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments, and inimitable style points out the author of Lauder's Preface and Postscript, will no longer allow one to *plume himself with his feathers*, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance; an assistance which I am persuaded would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world in these sheets."—*Milton vindicated from the charge of plagiarism brought against him by Mr. Lauder, and Lauder himself convicted of several forgeries and gross impositions on the publick. By John Douglas, M. A. Rector of Eaton Constantine, Salop.* 8vo. 1751, p. 77.

should most advance its honour, or best distinguish its beauties. Some have revised editions, others have published commentaries, and all have endeavoured to make their particular studies, in some degree, subservient to this general emulation.

Among the inquiries, to which this ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospection of the progress of this mighty genius, in the construction of his work; a view of the fabrick gradually rising, perhaps from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure, through all its varieties, to the simplicity of its first plan; to find what was first projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected, whether its founder dug them from the quarries of nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own.

This inquiry has been, indeed, not wholly neglected, nor, perhaps, prosecuted with the care and diligence that it deserves. Several criticks have offered their conjectures; but none have much endeavoured to enforce or ascertain them. *Mr. Voltaire tells us, without proof, that the first hint of "Paradise Lost" was taken from a farce called *Adamo*, written by a player; †Dr. Pearce, that it was derived

* Essay upon the Civil Wars of France, and also upon the Epick Poetry of the European Nations, from Homer down to Milton, 8vo. 1727, p. 103. E.

† Preface to a Review of the Text of the Twelve Books of Milton's Paradise Lost, in which the chief of Dr. Bentley's Emendations are considered. 8vo. 1733. E.

from an Italian tragedy, called *Il Paradiso Perso*; and * Mr. Peck, that it was borrowed from a wild romance. Any of these conjectures may possibly be true, but, as they stand without sufficient proof, it must be granted, likewise, that they may all possibly be false; at least they cannot preclude any other opinion, which without argument has the same claim to credit, and may perhaps be shown, by resistless evidence, to be better founded.

It is related, by steady and uncontroverted tradition, that the "Paradise Lost" was at first a *Tragedy*, and therefore, amongst tragedies the first hint is properly to be sought. In a manuscript, published from Milton's own hand, among a great number of subjects for tragedy, is "Adam unparadised," or "Adam in Exile;" and this, therefore, may be justly supposed the embryo of this great poem. As it is observable, that all these subjects had been treated by others, the manuscript can be supposed nothing more, than a memorial or catalogue of plays, which, for some reason, the writer thought worthy of his attention. When, therefore, I had observed, that "Adam in Exile" was named amongst them, I doubted not but, in finding the original of that tragedy, I should disclose the genuine source of "Paradise Lost." Nor was my expectation disappointed; for, having procured the *Adamus exul* of Grotius, I found, or imagined myself to find, the first draught, the *prima stamina* of this wonderful poem.

Having thus traced the *original* of this work, I

* New Memoirs of Mr. John Milton. By Francis Peck. 4to. 1740. p. 52.

was naturally induced to continue my search to the *collateral relations*, which it might be supposed to have contracted, in its progress to *maturity:* and having, at least, persuaded my own judgment that the search has not been intirely ineffectual, I now lay the result of my labours before the publick; with full conviction, that in questions of this kind, the world cannot be *mistaken*, at least cannot long continue in errour.

I cannot avoid acknowledging the *candour* of the author of that excellent monthly book, the "Gentleman's Magazine," in giving admission to the specimens in favour of this argument; and his *impartiality* in as freely inserting the several answers. I shall here subjoin some *extracts* from the xviith volume of this work, which I think suitable to my purpose. To which I have added, in order to obviate every pretence for cavil, a *list* of the authors quoted in the following *Essay*, with their respective *dates*, in comparison with the *date* of "Paradise Lost."

POSTSCRIPT.

When this Essay was almost finished, the splendid Edition of "Paradise Lost," so long promised by the reverend Dr. Newton, fell into my hands; of which I had, however, so little use, that as it would be injustice to censure, it would be flattery to commend it: and I should have totally forborn the mention of a book that I have not read, had not one passage at the conclusion of the life of Milton, excited in me too much pity and indignation to be suppressed in silence.

" Deborah, Milton's youngest daughter," says the Editor, " was married to Mr. Abraham Clarke, a weaver, in Spitalfields, and died in August 1727, in the 76th year of her age. She had ten children. Elizabeth, the youngest, was married to Mr. Thomas Foster, a weaver, in Spitalfields, and had seven children, who are all dead; and she herself is aged about *sixty*, and *weak* and *infirm*. She seemeth to be a *good plain sensible woman*, and has confirmed several particulars related above, and informed me of some others, which she had often heard from her mother." These the doctor enumerates, and then adds, " In all probability Milton's whole family will be extinct with her, and he can live only in his writings. And such is the caprice of fortune, this grand-daughter of a man, who will be an everlasting glory to the nation, has now for some years, with her husband, kept a little chandler's or grocer's shop, for their subsistence, lately at the lower Holloway, in the road between Highgate and London, and at present in Cock-lane, not far from Shoreditch church."

That this relation is true cannot be questioned: but, surely, the honour of letters, the dignity of sacred poetry, the spirit of the English nation, and the glory of human nature, require—that it should be true no longer.—In an age, in which statues are erected to the honour of this great writer, in which his effigy has been diffused on medals, and his work propagated by translations, and illustrated by commentaries; in an age, which amidst all its vices, and all its follies, has not become infamous for want of charity: it may be, surely, allowed to hope, that the living remains of Milton will be no longer suffered to

languish in distress. It is yet in the power of a great people, to reward the poet whose name they boast, and from their alliance to whose genius, they claim some kind of superiority to every other nation of the earth; that poet, whose works may possibly be read when every other monument of British greatness shall be obliterated; to reward him—not with pictures, or with medals, which, if he sees, he sees with contempt, but—with tokens of gratitude, which he, perhaps, may even now consider as not unworthy the regard of an immortal spirit. And surely, to those, who refuse their names to no other scheme of expense, it will not be unwelcome, that a *subscription* is proposed, for relieving, in the languor of age, the pains of disease, and the contempt of poverty, the grand-daughter of the author of "Paradise Lost." Nor can it be questioned, that if I, who have been marked out as the Zoilus of Milton, think this regard due to his posterity, the design will be warmly seconded by those, whose lives have been employed, in discovering his excellencies, and extending his reputation.

Subscriptions
For the Relief of
Mrs. ELIZABETH FOSTER,
Grand-daughter to JOHN MILTON,
are taken in by
Mr. Dodsley, in Pall-Mall;
Messrs. Cox & Collings, under the Royal Exchange;
Mr. Cave, at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell; and
Messrs. Payne & Bouquet, in Pater-noster-Row.

A

LETTER

TO THE

REVEREND MR. DOUGLAS,

OCCASIONED BY HIS

VINDICATION OF MILTON.

TO WHICH ARE SUBJOINED

SEVERAL CURIOUS ORIGINAL LETTERS

From the Authors of the UNIVERSAL HISTORY, Mr. AINSWORTH, Mr. MACLAURIN, &c.

BY WILLIAM LAUDER, A. M.

Quem penitet peccasse pœne est innocens. SENECA.

Corpora magnanimo satis est prostrasse Leoni.
Pugna suum finem, quum jacet hostis, habet. OVID.

\- - - *Prætuli Clementiam*
Juris Rigori. - - - GROTH Adamus Exul.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1751.

Of this Pamphlet, Mr. Lauder gives the following account: "An ingenious gentleman (for whose amazing abilities I had conceived the highest veneration, and in whose candour and friendship I reposed the most implicit and unlimited confidence) advised me to make an unreserved disclosure of all the lines I had interpolated against Milton, with this view, chiefly, that no future criticks might ever have an opportunity of valuing themselves upon small discoveries of a few lines, which would serve to revive my error, and keep the controversy eternally alive.

"With this expedient I then cheerfully complied, when that gentleman wrote for me the letter that was published in my name to Mr. Douglas, in which he committed one error that proved fatal to me, and at the same time injurious to the publick. For, in place of acknowledging that such and such particular passages only were interpolated, he gave up the whole Essay against Milton as delusion and misrepresentation, and thereby imposed more grievously on the publick than I had done, and that too in terms much more submissive and abject than the nature of the offence required.

"Though this letter in many respects contained not my sentiments, as plainly appears from the contradictory Postscript subjoined to it; yet such was my infatuation at that time, and implicit confidence in my friend, that I suffered it to be printed in my name, though I was previously informed by one of the greatest men of the age of its hurtful tendency, which I have since fully experienced to my cost.

"That the gentleman meant to serve me, and was really of opinion that the method he proposed might probably prove effectual for rescuing me from the odium of the publick, and in some measure restoring my character to the honour it had lost, I was then disposed to believe. His repeated acts of friendship to me on former occasions in conjunction with a reputation universally established for candour and integrity, left me little room to doubt it: though it is certainly a most preposterous method for a criminal, in order to obtain pardon for one act of felony, to confess himself guilty of a thousand. However, I cannot but condemn myself for placing so implicit a confidence in the judgment of any man, how great or good soever, as to suffer his mistakes to be given to the publick as my opinion." *King Charles vindicated from the charge of plagiarism, brought against him by Milton, and Milton himself convicted of forgery and a gross imposition on the publick.* 8vo. 1754. p. 3. E.

TO THE

REVEREND MR. DOUGLAS.

SIR,

CANDOUR and tenderness are in any relation, and on all occasions, eminently amiable; but when they are found in an adversary, and found so prevalent as to overpower that zeal which his cause excites, and that heat which naturally increases in the prosecution of argument, and which may be in a great measure justified by the love of truth, they certainly appear with particular advantages; and it is impossible not to envy those who possess the friendship of him, whom it is even some degree of good fortune to have known as an enemy.

I will not so far dissemble my weakness, or my fault, as not to confess that my wish was to have passed undetected; but since it has been my fortune to fail in my original design, to have the supposititious passages which I have inserted in my quotations made known to the world, and the shade which began to gather on the splendour of Milton totally dispersed, I cannot but count it an alleviation of my pain, that I have been defeated by a man who knows how to use advantages with so much moderation, and can enjoy the honour of conquest without the insolence of triumph.

It was one of the maxims of the Spartans, not to press upon a flying army, and therefore their enemies were always ready to quit the field, because they knew the danger was only in opposing. The civility with which you have thought proper to treat me, when you had incontestable superiority, has inclined me to make your victory complete, without any further struggle, and not only publickly to acknowledge the truth of the charge which you have hitherto advanced, but to confess, without the least dissimulation, subterfuge, or concealment, every other interpolation I have made in those authors, which you have not yet had opportunity to examine.

On the sincerity and punctuality of this confession I am willing to depend for all the future regard of mankind, and cannot but indulge some hopes, that they whom my offence has alienated from me, may by this instance of ingenuity and repentance, be propitiated and reconciled. Whatever be the event, I shall at least have done all that can be done in reparation of my former injuries to Milton, to truth, and to mankind, and entreat that those who shall continue implacable, will examine their own hearts, whether they have not committed equal crimes without equal proofs of sorrow, or equal acts of atonement.*

* The interpolations are distinguished by *Italick* characters.

PASSAGES INTERPOLATED IN MASENIUS.

The word *pandæmonium* in the marginal notes of Book I. Essay, page 10.

CITATION VI. Essay, page 38.

Adnuit ipsa dolo, malumque (heu! longa dolendi
Materies! & triste nefas!) vesana momordit
Tanti ignara mali. Mora nulla, solutus Avernus
Exspuit infandas acies; fractumque remugit
Divulsa compage solum. Nabathæa receptum
Regna dedere sonum, Pharioque in littore Nereus
Territus erubuit: simul adgemuere dolentes
Hesperiæ valles, Libyæque calentis arenæ
Exarsere procul. Stupefacta Lycaonis ursa
Constitit, & pavido riguit glacialis in axe:
Omnis cardinibus submotus inhorruit orbis;
Angeli hoc efficiunt, cœlestia jussa secuti.

CITATION VII. Essay, page 41.

Illa quidem fugiens, sparsis per terga capillis,
Ora rigat lacrimis, & cœlum questibus implet:
Talia voce rogans. Magni Deus arbiter orbis!
Qui rerum momenta tenes, solusque futuri
Præscius, elapsique memor: quem terra potentem
Imperio, cœlique tremunt; quem dite superbus
Horrescit Phlegethon, pavidoque furore veretur:
En! Styge crudeli premimur. Laxantur hiatus
Tartarei, dirusque solo dominatur Avernus,
Infernique canes populantur cuncta creata,
Et manes violant superos: discrimina rerum

Sustulit Antitheus, divumque oppressit honorem.
Respice Sarcotheam: nimis, heu! decepta momordit
Infaustas epulas, nosque omnes prodidit hosti.

CITATION VIII. Essay, page 42, the whole passage.

Quadrupedi pugnat quadrupes, volucrique volucris;
Et piscis cum pisce ferox hostilibus armis
Prœlia sœva gerit: jam pristina pabula spernunt,
Jam tondere piget viridantes gramine campos:
Alterum & alterius vivunt animalia letho:
Prisca nec in gentem humanam reverentia durat;
Sed fugiunt, vel si steterant fera bella minantur
Fronte truci, torvosque oculos jaculantur in illam.

CITATION IX. Essay, page 43.

Vatibus antiquis numerantur lumine cassis,
Tiresias, *Phineus*, Thamyrisque, & magnus Homerus.

The above passage stands thus in Masenius, in one line:

Tiresias cæcus, Thamyrisque, & Daphnis, Homerus.

N. B. The verse now cited is in Masenius's Poems, but not in the *Sarcotis*.

CITATION X. Essay, page 46.

In medio, turmas inter provectus ovantes
Cernitur Antitheus, reliquis hic altior unus
Eminet, & circum vulgus despectat inane:
Frons nebulis obscura latet, torvumque furorem
Dissimulat, fidæ tectus velamine noctis:

Persimilis turri præcelsæ, aut montibus altis
Antiquæ cedro, undatæ frondis honore.

PASSAGES INTERPOLATED IN GROTIUS

CITATION I. Essay, page 55.

Sacri tonantis hostis, exsul patriæ
Cœlestis adsum; tartari tristem specum
Fugiens, & atram noctis æternæ plagam.
Hac spe, quod unum maximum fugio malum,
Superos videbo. Fallor? an certè meo
Concussa tellus tota trepidat pondere?
Quid dico? Tellus? Orcus & pedibus tremit.

CITATION II. Essay, page 58, the whole passage.

Nam, me judice,
Regnare dignum est ambitu, etsi in Tartaro:
Alto præcesse Tartaro siquidem juvat,
Cœlis quam in ipsis servi obire munia.

CITATION IV. Essay, page 61, the whole passage.

Innominata quæque nominibus suis,
Libet vocare propriis vocabulis.

CITATION V. Essay, page 63.

Terrestris orbis rector! & princeps freti!
Cœli solique soboles; ætherium genus!
Adame! dextram liceat amplecti tuam!

CITATION VI. Essay, *ibid.*

Quod illud animal, tramite obliquo means,
Ad me volutum flexili serpit viâ?

Sibila retorquet ora setosum caput
Trifidamque linguam vibrat: oculi ardent duo,
Carbunculorum luce certantes rubrâ.

CITATION VII. Essay, page 65, the whole passage.

——Nata deo! atque homine sata!
Regina mundi! eademque interitus inscia!
Cunctis colenda!——.

CITATION VIII. Essay, page 66, the whole passage.

Rationis etenim omninò paritas exigit,
Ego bruta quando bestia evasi loquens;
Ex homine, qualis ante, te fieri Deam.

CITATION IX. Essay, *ibid.*

Per sancta thalami sacra, per jus nominis
Quodcumque nostri: sive me natam vocas,
Ex te creatam; sive communi patre
Ortam, sororem; sive potius conjugem:
Cassam, oro, dulci luminis jubare tui
Ne me relinquas: nunc tuo auxilio est opus.
Cum versa sors est. Unicum lapsæ mihi
Firmamen, unam spem gravi adflictæ malo,
Te mihi reserva, dum licet: mortalium
Ne tota soboles pereat unius nece:
Tibi nam relicta, quò petam? aut ævum exigam?

CITATION X. Essay, page 67, the whole passage.

Tu namque soli numini contrarius,
Minus es nocivus; ast ego nocentior,

(Adeoque misera magis, quippe miseriæ comes
Origoque scelus est, lurida mater male!)
Deumque læsi scelere, teque, vir! simul.

CITATION XI. Essay, page 68, the whole passage.

Quod comedo, poto, gigno, diris subjacet.

INTERPOLATION IN RAMSAY.

CITATION VI. Essay, page 88.

O judex! nova me facies inopinaque terret;
Me maculæ turpes, nudæque in corpore sordes,
Et cruciant duris exercita pectora pœnis:
Me ferus horror agit. Mihi non vernantia prata,
Non vitrei fontes, cœli non aurea templa,
Nec sunt grata mihi sub utroque jacentia sole:
Judicis ora Dei sic terrent, laucinat ægrum
Sic pectus mihi noxa. O si mî abrumpere vitam,
Et detur pœnam quovis evadere letho!
Ipsa parens utinam mihi tellus ima dehiscat!
Ad piceas trudarque umbras, atque infera regna!
Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam!
Montibus aut premar injectis, cœlique ruinâ!
Ante tuos vultus, tua quam flammantiaque ora
Suspiciam, caput objectem & cœlestibus armis!

INTERPOLATIONS IN STAPHORSTIUS.

CITATION III. Essay, page 104.

Fœdus in humanis fragili quod sanctius ævo!
Firmius & melius, quod magnificentius, ac quam
Conjugii, sponsi sponsæque jugalia sacra!

Auspice te, fugiens alieni subcuba lecti,
Dira libido hominum tota de gente repulsa est:
Ac tantum gregibus pecudum ratione carentum
Imperat, & sine lege tori furibunda vagatur.
Auspice te, quam jura probant, rectumque, piumque,
Filius atque pater, fraterque innotuit: & quot
Vincula vicini sociarunt sanguinis, a te
Nominibus didicêre suam distinguere gentem.

CITATION VI. Essay, page 109.

Cœlestes animæ! sublimia templa tenentes,
Laudibus adcumulate deum super omnia magnum!—
Tu quoque nunc animi vis tota ac maxuma nostri!
Tota tui in Domini grates dissolvere laudes!
Aurorâ redeunte novâ, redeuntibus umbris.
Immensum! augustum! verum! inscrutabile numen!
Summe Deus! sobolesque Dei! concorsque duorum,
Spiritus! æternas retines, bone rector! habenas.
Per mare, per terras, cœlosque, atque unus Jehova
Existens, celebrabo tuas, memorique sonabo
Organico plectro laudes. Te pectore amabo,
Te primum, & medium, & summum, sed fine carentem,
O miris mirande modis! ter maxime rerum!
Collustrat terras dum lumine Titan Eoo!

INTERPOLATION IN FOX.

Essay, page 116.

Tu Psychephone
Hypocrisis esto, hoc sub Francisci pallio.
Tu Thanate, Martyromastix re & nomine sies.

Altered thus,

Tu Pyschephone!
Hypocrisis esto; hoc sub Francisci pallio,
Quo tutò tecti sese credunt emori.

INTERPOLATION IN QUINTIANUS.

Essay, page 117.

Mic. Cur huc procaci veneris cursu refer?
Manere si quis in sua potest domo,
Habitare numquam curet alienas domos.
Luc. Quis non, relictâ Tartari nigri domo,
Veniret? Illic summa tenebrarum lues,
Ubi pedor ingens redolet extremum situm.
Hic autem amœna regna, & dulcis quies;
Ubi serenus ridet æternùm dies.
Mutare facile* est pondus immensum levi,
Summos dolores maximisque gaudiis.

INTERPOLATION IN BEZA.

Essay, page 119.

Stygemque testor, & profunda Tartari,
Nisi impediret livor, & queis prosequor
Odia supremum numen, atque hominum genus,
Pietate motus hinc patris, & hinc filii,
Possem parenti condolere & filio,
Quasi exuissem omnem malitiam ex pectore.

INTERPOLATION IN FLETCHER.

Essay, page 124.

Nec tamen æternos obliti (absiste timere)
Umquam animos, fessique ingentes ponimus iras.

* For *facile*, the word *volupe* was substituted in the Essay.

Nec fas; non sic deficimus, nec talia tecum
Gessimus, in cœlos olim tua signa secuti.
Est hic, est vitæ et magni contemptor Olympi,
Quique oblatam animus lucis nunc respuat aulam,
Et domiti tantum placeat cui regia cœli.
Ne dubita, numquam fractis hæc pectora, numquam
Deficient animis: prius ille ingentia cœli
Atria, desertosque æternæ lucis alumnos
Destituens, Erebum admigret noctemque profundam,
Et Stygiis mutet radiantia lumina flammis.
In promptu caussa est: superest invicta voluntas,
Immortale odium, vindictæ et seva cupido.

INTERPOLATIONS IN TAUBMAN.

Essay, page 132.

Tune, ait, imperio regere omnia solus; et una
Filius iste tuus, qui se tibi subjicit ultro,
Ac genibus minor ad terram prosternit, et offert
Nescio quos toties animi servilis honores?
Et tamen æterni proles æterna Jehovæ
Audit ab ætherea luteaque propagine mundi.
(Scilicet hunc natum dixisti cuncta regentem;
Cœlitibus regem cunctis, dominumque supremum)
Huic ego sim supplex? ego? quo præstantior alter
Non agit in superis. Mihi jus dabit ille, suum qui
Dat caput alterius sub jus et vincula legum?
Semideus reget iste polos? reget avia terræ?
Me pressum leviore manu fortuna tenebit?
Et cogar æternum duplici servire tyranno?
Haud ita. Tu solus non polles fortibus ausis.
Non ego sic cecidi, nec sic mea fata premuntur,

Ut nequeam relevare caput, colloque superbum
Excutere imperium. Mihi si mea dextra favebit,
Audeo totius mihi jus promittere mundi.

Essay, page 152.

Throni, dominationes, principatus, virtutes, potestates, is said to be a line borrowed by Milton from the title-page of Heywood's "Hierarchy of Angels." But there are more words in Heywood's title; and, according to his own arrangement of his subjects, they should be read thus:—*Seraphim, cherubim, throni, potestates, angeli, archangeli, principatus, dominationes.*

These are my interpolations, minutely traced without any arts of evasion. Whether from the passages that yet remain, any reader will be convinced of my general assertion, and allow, that Milton had recourse for assistance to any of the authors whose names I have mentioned, I shall not now be very diligent to enquire, for I had no particular pleasure in subverting the reputation of Milton, which I had myself once endeavoured to exalt*; and of which, the foundation had always remained untouched by me, had not my credit and my interest been blasted,

* Virorum maximus—JOANNES MILTONUS—Poeta celeberrimus—non Angliæ modo, soli natalis, verum generis humani ornamentum—cujus eximius liber, Anglicanis versibus conscriptus, vulgo PARADISUS AMISSUS, immortalis illud ingenii monumentum, cum ipsa ferè æternitate perennaturum est opus!—Hujus memoriam Anglorum primus, post tantum, proh dolor! ab tanti excessu poetæ intervallum, statua eleganti in loco celeberrimo, cœnobio Westmonasteriensi, posita, regum, principum,

or thought to be blasted, by the shade which it cast from its boundless elevation.

About ten years ago, I published an edition of Dr. Johnston's translation of the "Psalms," and having procured from the general assembly of the church of Scotland, a recommendation of its use to the lower classes of grammar-schools, into which I had begun to introduce it, though not without much controversy and opposition; I thought it likely that I should, by annual publications, improve my little fortune, and be enabled to support myself in freedom from the miseries of indigence. But Mr. Pope, in his malevolence to Mr. Benson, who had distinguished himself by his fondness for the same version, destroyed all my hopes by a distich, in which he places Johnston in a contemptuous comparison with the author of "Paradise Lost." *

antistitum, illustriumque Angliæ virorum cæmeterio, vir ornatissimus, Gulielmus Benson prosecutus est.

Poetarum Scotorum Musæ Sacræ in præfatione, Edinb. 1739.

A character, as high and honourable as ever was bestowed upon him by the most sanguine of his admirers! and as this was my cool and sincere opinion of that wonderful man formerly, so I declare it to be the same still, and ever will be, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, occasioned merely by passion and resentment; which appear, however, by the Postscript to the Essay, to be so far from extending to the posterity of Milton, that I recommend his only remaining descendant, in the warmest terms, to the public.

* On two unequal crutches prop'd he †came
MILTON'S on this, on that *one* JOHNSTON'S name.
Dunciad, Book IV.

† *Benson.*] This man endeavoured to raise himself to fame, by erecting monuments, striking coins, and procuring translations of Milton; and afterwards by a great passion for Arthur Johnston,

From this time, all my praises of Johnston became ridiculous, and I was censured with great freedom, for forcing upon the schools, an author whom Mr. Pope had mentioned only as a foil to a better poet. On this occasion, it was natural not to be pleased, and my resentment seeking to discharge itself somewhere, was unhappily directed against Milton. I resolved to attack his fame, and found some passages in cursory reading, which gave me hopes of stigmatising him as a plagiary. The farther I carried my search, the more eager I grew for the discovery, and the more my hypothesis was opposed, the more I was heated with rage. The consequence of my blind passion, I need not relate; it has, by your detection, become apparent to mankind. Nor do I mention this provocation as adequate to the fury which I have shown, but as a cause of anger, less shameful and reproachful than fractious malice, personal envy, or national jealousy.

a Scots physician's version of the Psalms, of which he printed many fine editions. *Notes on the Dunciad.*

No fewer than six different editions of that useful and valuable book, two in quarto, two in octavo, and two in a lesser form, now lie like lumber in the hand of Mr. Vaillant, bookseller, the effects of Mr. Pope's ill-natured criticism.

One of these editions in quarto, illustrated with an interpretation and notes, after the manner of the classic authors *in usum Delphini*, was by the worthy editor, anno 1741, inscribed to his Royal Highness Prince George, as a proper book for his instruction in principles of piety, as well as knowledge of the Latin tongue, when he should arrive at due maturity of age. To restore this book to credit was the cause that induced me to engage in this disagreeable controversy, rather than any design to depreciate the just reputation of Milton.

But for the violation of truth, I offer no excuse, because I well know, that nothing can excuse it. Nor will I aggravate my crime, by disingenuous palliations. I confess it, I repent it, and resolve, that my first offence shall be my last. More I cannot perform, and more therefore cannot be required. I intreat the pardon of all men, whom I have by any means induced to support, to countenance, or patronise my frauds, of which I think myself obliged to declare that not one of my friends was conscious. I hope to deserve, by better conduct and more useful undertakings, that patronage which I have obtained from the most illustrious and venerable names by misrepresentation and delusion, and to appear hereafter in such a character, as shall give you no reason to regret that your name is frequently mentioned with that of,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble servant,

WILLIAM LAUDER.

December 20, 1750.

TESTIMONIES CONCERNING MR. LAUDER.

Edinb. May 22, 1734.

THESE are certifying, that Mr. William Lauder past his course at this university, to the general satisfaction of these masters, under whom he studied. That he has applied himself particularly to the study of humanity * ever since. That for several years past, he has taught with success, students in the Humanity Class, who were recommended to him by the professor thereof. And lastly, has taught that class itself, during the indisposition, and since the death of its late professor: and therefore is, in our opinion, a fit person to teach Humanity in any school or college whatever.

J. GOWDIE, S. S. T. P.
MATT. CRAUFURD, S. S. T. et Hist. Ec. Pr. Reg.
WILLIAM SCOTT, P. P.
ROBERT STUART, Ph. Nat. Pr.
COL. DRUMMOND, L. G. et P. Pr.
COL. MAC.LAURIN, Math. P. Edin.
AL. BAYNE, J. P.
CHARLES MACKY, Hist. P.
ALEX. MORRO, Anat. P.
WILLIAM DAWSON, L. H. P.

* So the Latin tongue is called in Scotland, from the Latin phrase, *classis humaniorum litcrarum*, the class or form where that language is taught.

A Letter from the Reverend Mr. Patrick Cuming, one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, and Regius Professor of Church History in the University there, to the Reverend Mr. Blair, Rector of the Grammar-school at Dundee.

D. B.

UPON a public advertisement in the newspapers, of the vacancy of a master's place in your school, Mr. William Lauder, a friend of mine, proposes to set up for a candidate, and goes over for that purpose. He has long taught the Latin with great approbation in this place, and given such proofs of his mastery in that language, that the best judges do upon all occasions recommend him as one who is qualified in the best manner. He has taught young boys and young gentlemen, with great success; nor did I ever hear of any complaint of him from either parents or children. I beg leave to recommend him to you as my friend; what friendship you show him, I will look upon as a very great act of friendship to me, of which he and I will retain the most grateful sense, if he is so happy as to be preferred. I persuade myself, you will find him ready at all times to be advised by you, as I have found him. *Indeed if justice had been done him, he should long ago have been advanced for his merit.* I ever am,

D. B.

Your most affectionate,

humble servant,

PATRICK CUMING.

Edin. Nov. 13, 1742.

A Letter from Mr. Mac-Laurin, late Professor of Mathematicks in the University of Edinburgh, to the Reverend Mr. George Blair, Rector of the Grammar-School at Dundee.

SIR,

THOUGH unacquainted, I take the liberty of giving you this trouble, from the desire I have always had to see Mr. Lauder provided in a manner suited to his talent. I know him to have made uncommon progress in classical learning, to have taught it with success, and never heard there could be any complaint against his method of teaching. I am, indeed, a stranger to the reasons of his want of success on former occasions. But after conversing with him, I have ground to hope, that he will be always advised by you, for whom he professes great esteem, and will be useful under you. I am,

Sir,
Your most obedient
humble servant,

College of Edinburgh,
Nov. 30, 1742.

COLIN MAC-LAURIN.

A Letter from the Authors of the "Universal History," to Mr. Lauder.

London, August 12th, 1741.

LEARNED SIR,

WHEN we so gladly took the first opportunity of reviving the memory and merit of your incomparable Johnston, in the first volume of our Universal His-

tory," our chief aim was to excite some generous *Mecenas* to favour the world with a new edition of a poem which we had long since beheld with no small concern, buried, as it were, by some unaccountable fatality, into an almost total oblivion; whilst others of that kind, none of them superior, many vastly inferior to it, rode, unjustly, as we thought, triumphant over his silent grave. And it is with great satisfaction that we have seen our endeavours so happily crowned in the edition you soon after gave of it at Edinburgh, in your learned and judicious vindication of your excellent author, and more particularly by the just deference which your learned and pious convocation has been pleased to pay to that *admirable version.*

We have had since then, the pleasure to see your worthy example followed here, in the several beautiful editions of the honourable Mr. Auditor Benson, with his critical notes upon the work.

It was, indeed, the farthest from our thoughts, to enter into the merit of the controversy between your two great poets, Johnston and Buchanan; neither were we so partial to either as not to see, that each had their shades as well as lights; so that, if the latter has been more happy in the choice and variety of his metre, it is as plain, that he has given his poetic genius such an unlimited scope, as has in many cases quite disfigured the peculiar and inimitable beauty, simplicity, and energy of the original, which the former, by a more close and judicious version, has constantly, and surprisingly displayed. Something like this we ventured to hint in our note upon these two noble versions; to have said more, would have been inconsistent with our designed brevity.

We have likewise since seen what your opponent has writ in praise of the one, and derogation of the other, and think you have sufficiently confuted him, and with respect to us, he has been so far from giving us any cause to retract what we had formerly said, that it has administered an occasion to us of vindicating it, as we have lately done by some critical notes on your excellent Johnston, which we communicated soon after to Mr. *A. B.* who was pleased to give them a place in his last edition of him, and which we doubt not you have seen long ago. How they have been relished among you we know not, but with us they have been thought sufficient to prove what we have advanced, as well as to direct the attentive reader to discover new instances of your author's exactness and elegance, in every page, if not almost in every line.

We gratefully accept of the books, and kind compliments you were pleased to transmit to us by Mr. Strahan, and had long since returned you our thanks, but for the many avocations which the great work you know us to be engaged in doth of necessity bring upon us; obliging us, or some at least of our society, to make from time to time an excursion to one or other of our two learned universities, and consulting them upon the best method of carrying on this work to the greatest advantage to the public. This has been some considerable part of our employment for these twelve months past; and we flatter ourselves, that we have, with their assistance and approbation, made such considerable improvements on our original plan, as will scarcely fail of being acceptable to the learned world. They will shortly

appear in print, to convince the world that we have not been idle, though this sixth volume is like to appear somewhat later in the year than was usual with our former ones. We shall take the liberty to transmit some copies of our new plan to you as soon as they are printed. All we have left to wish with respect to your excellent countryman and his version is, that it may always meet with such powerful and impartial advocates, and that it may be as much esteemed by all candid judges, as it is by,

Learned Sir,

Your sincere Well-wishers and humble Servants,

The AUTHORS of the "Universal History."

A Letter from the learned Mr. Robert Ainsworth, Author of the Latin and English Dictionary, to Mr. Lauder.

LEARNED AND WORTHY SIR,

THESE wait on you to thank you for the honour you have done a person, equally unknown as undeserving, in your valuable present, which I did not receive till several weeks after it was sent: and since I received it, my eyes have been so bad, and my hand so unstable, that I have been forced to defer my duty, as desirous to thank you with my own hand. I congratulate to your nation the just honour ascribed to it by its neighbours and more distant countries, in having bred two such excellent poets as your Buchanan and Johnston, whom to name is to commend; but am concerned for their honour at

home, who being committed together, seem to me both to suffer a diminution, whilst justice is done to neither. But at the same time I highly approve your nation's piety in bringing into your schools sacred instead of profane poesy, and heartily wish that ours, and all Christian governments, would follow your example herein. If a mixture of *utile dulci* be the best composition in poetry, (which is too evident to need the judgment of the nicest critic in the art) surely the *utile* so transcendently excels in the sacred hymns, that a Christian must deny his name that doth not acknowledge it: and if the *dulce* seem not equally to excel, it must be from a vitiated taste of those who read them in the original, and in others at second-hand from translations. For the manner of writing in the East and West are widely distant, and which to a paraphrast must render his task exceeding difficult, as requiring a perfect knowledge in two languages, wherein the idioms and graces of speech, caused by the diversity of their religion, laws, customs, &c. are as remote as the inhabitants, wherein notwithstanding your poets have succeeded to admiration.

Your main contest seems to me, when stript of persons, whether the easy or sublime in poesy be preferable; if so,

Non opis est nostræ tantam componere litem:

nor think I it in your case material to be decided. Both these have their particular excellencies and graces, and youth ought to be taught wherein (which the matter ought chiefly to determine) the one hath place, and where the other. Now since the hymns

of David, Moses, and other divine poets intermixt with them, (infinitely excelling those of Callimachus, Alcæus, Sappho, Anacreon, and all others) abound in both these virtues, and both your poets are acknowledged to be very happy in paraphrasing them, it is my opinion both of them, without giving the least preference to either, should be read alternately in your schools, as the tutor shall direct. Pardon, learned Sir, this scribble to my age and weakness, both which are very great, and command me wherein I may serve you, as,

Learned Sir,

Your obliged, thankful, and obedient Servant,

Spitalfields, Sept. 1741. ROBERT AINSWORTH.

A Letter from the Authors of the "Universal History" to Mr. Auditor Benson.

SIR,

IT is with no small pleasure that we see Dr. Johnston's translation of the Psalms revived in so elegant a manner, and adorned with such a just and learned display of its inimitable beauties. As we flatter ourselves that the character we gave it in our first volume of the "Universal History," did in some measure contribute to it, we hope, that in justice to that great poet, you will permit us to cast the following mites into your treasury of critical notes on his noble version. We always thought the palm by far this author's due, as upon many other accounts,

so especially for two excellencies hitherto not taken notice of by any critic, that we know of, and which we beg leave to transmit to you, and if you think fit, by you to the public, in the following observations.

We beg leave to subscribe ourselves,

Sir, &c.

The AUTHORS of the "Universal History."

Dr. Isaac Watts, D. D. in his late Book, entitled, "The Improvement of the Mind," Lond. 1741, p. 114.

UPON the whole survey of things, it is my opinion, that for almost all boys who learn this tongue, [the Latin] it would be much safer to be taught *Latin poesy* (as soon, and as far as they can need it) from those excellent translations of David's Psalms, which are given us by Buchanan in the various measures of Horace; and the *lower classes* had better read Dr. Johnston's translation of those Psalms, another elegant writer of the Scots nation, instead of Ovid's Epistles; for he has turned the same Psalms, perhaps with greater elegancy, into elegiac verse, whereof the learned W. Benson, Esq. has lately published a new edition; and I hear that these Psalms are honoured with an increasing use in the schools of Holland and Scotland. A stanza, or a couplet of those writers would now and then stick upon the minds of youth, and would furnish them infinitely better with pious and moral thoughts, and do something towards making them good men and Christians.

An Act of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, recommending Dr. Arthur Johnston's Latin Paraphrase of the Psalms of David, &c.

At Edinburgh, 13th of November, 1740. post meridiem.

A Petition having been presented to the late General Assembly, by Mr. William Lauder, Teacher of Humanity in Edinburgh, craving, That Dr. Arthur Johnston's Latin Paraphrase on the Psalms of David, and Mr. Robert Boyd of Trochrig his *Hecatombe Christiana*, may be recommended to be taught in all grammar-schools; and the assembly having appointed a committee of their number to take the desire of the foresaid petition into their consideration, and report to the Commission: the said committee offered their opinion, that the Commission should grant the desire of the said petition, and recommend the said Dr. Johnston's Paraphrase to be taught in the lower classes of the schools, and Mr. George Buchanan's Paraphrase on the Psalms, together with Mr. Robert Boyd of Trochrig's *Hecatombe Christiana* in the higher classes of schools, and Humanity-classes in universities. The Commission having heard the said report, unanimously approved thereof, and did, and hereby do recommend accordingly.

Extracted by

WILLIAM GRANT,* Cl. Ecl. Sc.

* This honourable gentleman is now his Majesty's Advocate for Scotland.

A Letter from the learned Mr. Abraham Gronovius, Secretary to the University of Leyden, to Mr. Lauder, concerning the *Adamus Exsul* of Grotius.

Clarissimo Viro, Wilhelmo Laudero, Abrahamus Gronovius, S. P. D.

Postquam binæ literæ tuæ ad me perlatæ fuerunt, duas editiones carminum H. Grotii, viri vere summi, excussi; verùm ab utraque tragœdiam, quam *Adamum Exsulem* inscripsit ὁ πάνυ, abesse deprehendi; neque ullum ejusdem exemplar, quamvis tres * editiones exstare adnotaveram, ullibi offendere potui, adeo ut spe, quam vorabam desiderio tuo satisfaciendi, me prorsus excidisse existimarem.

Verùm nuperrime fortè contigit, ut primam *Tragœdiæ Grotianæ* editionem, Hagæ, An. 1601. publicatam, beneficio amicissimi mihi viri nactus fuerim, ejusque decem priores paginas, quibus præter chorum actus primus comprehenditur, a Jacobo meo, optimæ spei adolescente, transcriptas nunc ad te mitto. Vale vir doctissime, meque ut facis amare perge. Dabam Lugd. Bat. A. D. IV. Eid. Sept. A. D. MDCCXLVI.

* Though Gronovius here mentions only three editions of this noble and curious performance, the *Adamus Exsul* of Grotius; yet it appears from the catalogue of his works, that no fewer than four have been printed, two in quarto, and two in octavo, in the years 1601, 1608, and 1635; two having been made, one in quarto, the other in octavo, Anno 1601.

A Second Letter from the same Gentleman to Mr. Lauder, on the same Subject.

Clarissime atque Eruditissime Vir !

Posteaquam tandem Jacobus meus residuam partem, quam desiderabas, *Tragœdiæ Grotianæ* transcripserat, ut eâ diutius careres, committere nolui: quod autem citius illam ad finem perducere non potuerit, obstiterunt variæ occupationes, quibus districtus fuit. Nam præter scholastica studia, quibus strenuè incubuit, ipsi componenda erat oratio, qua rudimenta linguæ Græcæ Latinæque deponeret, eamque, quod vehementer lætor, venustè, & quidem stilo ligato, composuit, & in magna auditorum corona pronuntiavit. Quod autem ad exemplar ipsum, quo *Adamus Exsul* comprehenditur, spectat, id lubens, si meum foret, ad te perferri curarem, verùm illud a clarissimo possessore tanti æstimatur, ut persuasum habeam me istud minimè ab ipso impetraturum: & sane sacra carmina Grotii adeo rarò obvia sunt, ut eorundem exemplar apud ipsos *remonstrantium* ecclesiastas frustra quæsiverim.

Opus ipsum inscriptum est HENRICO BORBONIO, PRINCIPI CONDÆO; & forma libri est in quarto, ut nullo pacto literis includi possit. Ceterùm, pro splendidissima & Magnæ Britanniæ principe, cui meritò dicata est, digna editione Psalmorum, ex versione metrica *omnium ferè poëtarum principis* JONSTONI maximas tibi grates habet agitque Jacobus. Utinam illustrissimus Bensonus in usum serenissimi principis, atque ingeniorum in altiora surgentium, eâdem formâ,

iisdemque typis exarari juberet divinos illos Ciceronis de Officiis libros, dignos sane, quos diurnâ nocturnâque manu versaret princeps, a quo aliquando Britannici regni majestas et populi salus pendebunt! Interim tibi, eruditissime vir, atque etiam politissimo D. Caveo, pro muneribus literariis, quæ per nobilissimum Lawsonium* ad me curâstis, magno opere me obstrictum agnosco, eademque summa cum voluptate a me perlecta sunt.

Filius meus te plurimùm salutat.

Vale doctissime vir, meisque verbis D. Caveum saluta, atque amare perge,

Tuum,

ABRAHAMUM GRONOVIUM.

Dabam Leidis, A. D. XIV. KAL.
Majas, A. D. MDCCXLVII.

* The person here meant was the learned and worthy Dr. Isaac Lawson, late physician to the English army in Flanders; by whom Mr. Gronovius did me the honour to transmit to me two or three acts of the *Adamus Exsul* of Grotius, transcribed by his son Mr. James. The truth of this particular consists perfectly well with the knowledge of the Doctor's brother, John Lawson, Esq counsellor at law; who also had the same thing lately confirmed to him by Mr. Gronovius himself in Holland.

POSTSCRIPT.

AND now my character is placed above all suspicion of fraud by authentic documents, I will make bold at last to pull off the mask, and declare sincerely the true motive that induced me to interpolate a few lines into some of the authors quoted by me in my Essay on Milton, which was this: Knowing the prepossession in favour of Milton, how deeply it was rooted in many, I was willing to make trial, if the partial admirers of that author would admit a translation of his own words to pass for his sense, or exhibit his meaning: which I thought they would not: nor was I mistaken in my conjecture, forasmuch as several gentlemen, seemingly persons of judgment and learning, assured me, they humbly conceived I had not proved my point, and that Milton might have written as he has done, supposing he had never seen these authors, or they had never existed. Such is the force of prejudice! This exactly confirms the judicious observation of the excellent moralist and poet:

> Pravo favore labi mortales solent,
> Et pro judicio dum stant erroris sui,
> Ad pœnitendum rebus manifestis agi.

For had I designed (as the vindicator of Milton supposes) to impose a trick on the public, and procure credit to my assertions by an imposture, I would never have drawn lines from Hog's translation of Milton, a book common at every sale, I had almost said at

every stall, nor ascribed them to authors so easily attained: I would have gone another way to work, by translating forty or fifty lines, and assigning them to an author, whose works possibly might not be found till the world expire at the general conflagration. My imposing therefore on the public in general, instead of a few obstinate persons (for whose sake alone the stratagem was designed) is the only thing culpable in my conduct, for which again I most humbly ask pardon: and that this, and this only was, as no other could be, my design, no one I think can doubt, from the account I have just now given; and whether that was so criminal, as it has been represented, I shall leave every impartial mind to determine.

AN ACCOUNT

OF AN

ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN

THE

LONGITUDE. *

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCLV.

It is well known to seamen and philosophers, that after the numerous improvements produced by the extensive commerce of the later ages, the great defect in the art of sailing is ignorance of longitude, or of the distance to which the ship has passed eastward or westward, from any given meridian.

That navigation might be at length set free from this uncertainty, the legislative power of this kingdom incited the industry of searchers into nature, by a large reward proposed to him who should show a practicable method of finding the longitude at sea; and proportionable recompences to those, who, though they should not fully attain this great end, might yet make such advances and discoveries as should facilitate the work to those that might succeed them.

* An Account of an attempt to ascertain the Longitude at Sea, by an exact Theory of the Variation of the Magnetical Needle; with a Table of Variations at the most remarkable cities in Europe, from the year 1660 to 1860. By Zachariah Williams.

By the splendor of this golden encouragement many eyes were dazzled, which nature never intended to pry into her secrets. By the hope of sudden riches many understandings were set on work very little proportioned to their strength, among whom whether mine shall be numbered, must be left to the candour of posterity: for I, among others, laid aside the business of my profession, to apply myself to the study of the longitude, not indeed in expectation of the reward due to a complete discovery; yet not without hopes, that I might be considered as an assistant to some greater genius, and receive from the justice of my country the wages offered to an honest and not unsuccessful labourer in science.

Considering the various means by which this important enquiry has been pursued, I found that the observation of the eclipses, either of the primary or secondary planets, being possible but at certain times, could be of no use to the sailor; that the motions of the moon had been long attended, however accurately, without any consequence; that other astronomical observations were difficult and uncertain with every advantage of situation, instruments and knowledge; and were therefore utterly impracticable to the sailor, tost upon the water, ill provided with instruments, and not very skilful in their application.

The hope of an accurate clock or time-keeper is more specious. But when I began these studies, no movements had yet been made that were not evidently unaccurate and uncertain: and even of the mechanical labours which I now hear so loudly celebrated, when I consider the obstruction of movements

by friction, the waste of their parts by attrition, the various pressure of the atmosphere, the effects of different effluvia upon metals, the power of heat and cold upon all matter, the changes of gravitation and the hazard of concussion, I cannot but fear that they will supply the world with another instance of fruitless ingenuity, though I hope they will not leave upon this country the reproach of unrewarded diligence.

I saw therefore nothing on which I could fix with probability of success, but the magnetical needle, an instrument easily portable, and little subject to accidental injuries, with which the sailor has had a long acquaintance, which he will willingly study, and can easily consult.

The magnetic needle from the year 1300, when it is generally supposed to have been first applied by John Goia, of Amalphi, to the seaman's use, seems to have been long thought to point exactly to the north and south by the navigators of those times; who sailing commonly on the calm Mediterranean, or making only short voyages, had no need of very accurate observations; and who, if they ever transiently observed any deviations from the meridian, either ascribed them to some extrinsic and accidental cause, or willingly neglected what it was not necessary to understand.

But when the discovery of the new world turned the attention of mankind upon the naval sciences, and long courses required greater niceties of practice, the variation of the needle soon became observable, and was recorded in 1500 by Sebastian Cabot, a Por-

tuguese, who, at the expence of the king of England, discovered the northern coasts of America.

As the next century was a time of naval adventures, it might be expected that the variation once observed, should have been well studied: yet it seems to have been little heeded; for it was supposed to be constant, and always the same in the same place, till in 1625 Gellibrand noted its changes, and published his observations.

From this time the philosophical world had a new subject of speculation, and the students of magnetism employed their researches upon the gradual changes of the needle's direction, or the variations of the variation, which have hitherto appeared so desultory and capricious, as to elude all the schemes which the most fanciful of the philosophical dreamers could devise for its explication. Any system that could have united these tormenting diversities, they seem inclined to have received, and would have contentedly numbered the revolutions of a central magnet, with very little concern about its existence, could they have assigned it any motion or vicissitude of motions which would have corresponded with the changes of the needle.

Yet upon this secret property of magnetism I ventured to build my hopes of ascertaining the longitude at sea. I found it undeniably certain that the needle varies its direction in a course eastward or westward between any assignable parallels of latitude: and supposing nature to be in this as in all other operations uniform and consistent, I doubted not but the variation proceeded in some established

method, though perhaps too abstruse and complicated for human comprehension.

This difficulty however was to be encountered; and by close and steady perseverance of attention I at last subdued, or thought myself to have subdued it; having formed a regular system in which all the phænomena seemed to be reconciled; and being able from the variation in places where it is known to trace it to those where it is unknown; or from the past to predict the future: and consequently knowing the latitude and variation, to assign the true longitude of any place.

With this system I came to London, where having laid my proposals before a number of ingenious gentlemen, it was agreed that during the time required to the completion of my experiments, I should be supported by a joint subscription to be repaid out of the reward, to which they concluded me entitled. Among the subscribers was Mr. Rowley, the memorable constructor of the orrery; and among my favourers was the Lord Piesley, a title not unknown among magnetical philosophers. I frequently shewed upon a globe of brass, experiments by which my system was confirmed, at the house of Mr. Rowley, where the learned and curious of that time generally assembled.

At this time great expectations were raised by Mr. Whiston, of ascertaining the longitude by the inclination of the needle, which he supposed to increase or diminish regularly. With this learned man I had many conferences, in which I endeavoured to evince what he has at last confessed in the narra-

tive of his life, the uncertainty and inefficacy of his method.

About the year 1729, my subscribers explained my pretensions to the Lords of the Admiralty, and the Lord Torrington declared my claim just to the reward assigned in the last clause of the act to those who should make discoveries conducive to the perfection of the art of sailing. This he pressed with so much warmth, that the commissioners agreed to lay my tables before Sir Isaac Newton, who excused himself, by reason of his age, from a regular examination: but when he was informed that I held the variation at London to be still encreasing; which he and the other philosophers, his pupils, thought to be then stationary, and on the point of regression, he declared that he believed my system visionary. I did not much murmur to be for a time overborne by that mighty name, even when I believed that the name only was against me: and I have lived till I am able to produce, in my favour, the testimony of time, the inflexible enemy of false hypotheses; the only testimony which it becomes human understanding to oppose to the authority of Newton.

My notions have indeed been since treated with equal superciliousness by those who have not the same title to confidence of decision; men who, though perhaps very learned in their own studies, have had little acquaintance with mine. Yet even this may be borne far better than the petulance of boys whom I have seen shoot up into philosophers by experiments which I have long since made and neglected, and by improvements which I have so long trans

ferred into my ordinary practice, that I cannot remember when I was without them.

When Sir Isaac Newton had declined the office assigned him, it was given to Mr. Molineux, one of the commissioners of the Admiralty, who engaged in it with no great inclination to favour me; but however thought one of the instruments, which, to confirm my own opinion, and to confute Mr. Whiston's, I had exhibited to the Admiralty, so curious or useful, that he surreptitiously copied it on paper, and clandestinely endeavoured to have it imitated by a workman for his own use.

This treatment naturally produced remonstrances and altercations, which indeed did not continue long, for Mr. Molineux died soon afterwards; and my proposals were for a time forgotten.

I will not however accuse him of designing to condemn me, without a trial; for he demanded a portion of my tables to be tried in a voyage to America, which I then thought I had reason to refuse him, not yet knowing how difficult it was to obtain, on any terms, an actual examination.

About this time the theory of Dr. Halley was the chief subject of mathematical conversation; and though I could not but consider him as too much a rival to be appealed to as a judge, yet his reputation determined me to solicit his acquaintance and hazard his opinion. I was introduced to him by Mr. Lowthorp and Dr. Desaguliers, and put my tables into his hands; which, after having had them about twenty days under consideration, he returned in the presence of the learned Mr. Machin, and many other skilful men, with an entreaty *that I would publish*

them speedily; for I should do infinite service to mankind.

It is one of the melancholy pleasures of an old man to recollect the kindness of friends, whose kindness he shall experience no more. I have now none left to favour my studies; and therefore naturally turn my thoughts on those by whom I was favoured in better days: and I hope the vanity of age may be forgiven, when I declare that I can boast among my friends, almost every name of my time that is now remembered: and that in that great period of mathematical competition scarce any man failed to appear as my defender, who did not appear as my antagonist.

By these friends I was encouraged to exhibit to the Royal Society, an ocular proof of the reasonableness of my theory by a sphere of iron, on which a small compass moved in various directions, exhibited no imperfect system of magnetical attraction. The experiment was shown by Mr. Hawkesbee, and the explanation, with which it was accompanied, was read by Dr. Mortimer. I received the thanks of the society: and was solicited to reposit my theory properly sealed and attested among their archives, for the information of posterity. I am informed, that this whole transaction is recorded in their minutes.

After this I withdrew from public notice, and applied myself wholly to the continuation of my experiments, the confirmation of my system, and the completion of my tables, with no other companion than Mr. Gray, who shared all my studies and amusements, and used to repay my communications of magnetism, with his discoveries in electricity. Thus I

proceeded with incessant diligence; and perhaps in the zeal of enquiry did not sufficiently reflect on the silent encroachments of time, or remember, that no man is in more danger of doing little, than he who flatters himself with abilities to do all. When I was forced out of my retirement, I came loaded with the infirmities of age, to struggle with the difficulties of a narrow fortune, cut off by the blindness of my daughter from the only assistance which I ever had; deprived by time of my patron and friends, a kind of stranger in a new world, where curiosity is now diverted to other objects, and where, having no means of ingratiating my labours, I stand the single votary of an obsolete science, the scoff of puny pupils of puny philosophers.

In this state of dereliction and depression, I have bequeathed to posterity the following table: which, if time shall verify my conjectures, will shew that the variation was once known; and that mankind had once within their reach an easy method of discovering the longitude.

I will not however engage to maintain, that all my numbers are theoretically and minutely exact: I have not endeavoured at such degrees of accuracy as only distract enquiry without benefiting practice. The quantity of the variation has been settled partly by instruments, and partly by computation: instruments must always partake of the imperfection of the eyes and hands of those that make, and of those that use them: and computation, till it has been rectified by experiment, is always in danger of some omission in the premises, or some error in the deduction.

It must be observed, in the use of this table, that

though I name particular cities for the sake of exciting attention, yet the tables are adjusted only to longitude and latitude. Thus when I predict that at Prague, the variation will in the year 1800 be 24¼ W. I intend to say that it will be such if Prague be as I have placed it after the best geographers in longitude, 14 30′. E. latitude 50 40′. but that this is its true situation I cannot be certain. The latitude of many places is unknown, and the longitude is known of very few; and even those who are unacquainted with science will be convinced that it is not easily to be found, when they are told how many degrees Dr. Halley, and the French mathematicians, place the Cape of Good Hope distant from each other.

Those who would pursue this enquiry with philosophical nicety, must likewise procure better needles than those commonly in use. The needle, which after long experience I recommend to mariners, must be of pure steel, the spines and the cap of one piece, the whole length three inches, each spine containing four grains and a half of steel, and the cap thirteen grains and a half.

The common needles are so ill formed, or so unskilfully suspended, that they are affected by many causes besides magnetism: and among other inconveniences have given occasion to the idle dream of a horary variation.

I doubt not but particular places may produce exceptions to my system. There may be, in many parts of the earth, bodies which obstruct or intercept the general influence of magnetism; but those interruptions do not infringe the theory. It is allowed, that water will run down a declivity, though sometimes a

strong wind may force it upwards. It is granted, that the sun gives light at noon, though in certain conjunctions it may suffer an eclipse.

Those causes, whatever they are, that interrupt the course of the magnetical powers, are least likely to be found in the great ocean, when the earth, with all its minerals, is secluded from the compass by the vast body of uniform water. So that this method of finding the longitude, with a happy contrariety to all others, is most easy and practicable at sea.

This method, therefore, I recommend to the study and prosecution of the sailor and philosopher; and the appendant specimen I exhibit to the candid examination of the maritime nations, as a specimen of a general table, shewing the variation at all times and places for the whole revolution of the magnetic poles, which I have long ago begun, and, with just encouragement, should have long ago compleated.

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

PLANS OFFERED FOR THE CONSTRUCTION

OF

BLACK-FRIARS BRIDGE.

IN THREE LETTERS, TO THE PRINTER OF THE GAZETTEER.

LETTER I.

SIR, Dec. 1, 1759.

THE Plans which have been offered by different architects, of different reputation and abilities, for the Construction of the Bridge intended to be built at Black-Friars, are, by the rejection of the greater part, now reduced to a small number; in which small number three are supposed to be much superiour to the rest; so that only three architects are now properly competitors for the honour of this great employment; *by two of whom are proposed semi-circular* and by the other *elliptical arches.*

The question is, therefore, whether an elliptical or semicircular arch is to be preferred?

The first excellence of a bridge built for commerce over a large river, is strength; for a bridge which cannot stand, however beautiful, will boast its beauty but a little while; the stronger arch is therefore to

be preferred, and much more to be preferred, if with greater strength it has greater beauty.

Those who are acquainted with the mathematical principles of architecture, are not many; and yet fewer are they who will, upon any single occasion, endure any laborious stretch of thought, or harass their minds with unaccustomed investigations. We shall therefore attempt to shew the *weakness of the elliptical arch*, by arguments which appeal simply to common reason, and which will yet stand the test of geometrical examination.

All arches have a certain degree of weakness. No hollow building can be equally strong with a solid mass, of which every upper part presses perpendicularly upon the lower. Any weight laid upon the top of an arch, has a tendency to force that top into the vacuity below; and the arch thus loaded on the top, stands only because the stones that form it, being wider in the upper than in the lower parts, that part that fills a wider space cannot fall through a space less wide; but the force which laid upon a flat would press directly downwards, is dispersed each way in a lateral direction, as the parts of a beam are pushed out to the right and left by a wedge driven between them. In proportion as the stones are wider at the top than at the bottom, they can less easily be forced downwards, and as their lateral surfaces tend more from the centre to each side, to so much more is the pressure directed laterally towards the piers, and so much less perpendicularly towards the vacuity.

Upon this plain principle the semicircular arch may be demonstrated to excel in strength the ellip-

tical arch, which approaching nearer to a straight line must be constructed with stones whose diminution downwards is very little, and of which the pressure is almost perpendicular.

It has yet been sometimes asserted by hardy ignorance, that the elliptical arch is stronger than the semicircular; or in other terms, that any mass is more strongly supported the less it rests upon the supporters. If the elliptical arch be equally strong with the semicircular, that is, if an arch, by approaching to a straight line, loses none of its stability, it will follow, that all arcuation is useless, and that the bridge may at last, without any inconvenience, consist of stone laid in straight lines from pillar to pillar. But if a straight line will bear no weight, which is evident at the first view, it is plain likewise, that an ellipsis will bear very little; and that as the arch is more curved, its strength is increased.

Having thus evinced the superiour strength of the semicircular arch, we have sufficiently proved, that it ought to be preferred; but to leave no objection unprevented, we think it proper likewise to observe, that the elliptical arch must always appear to want elevation and dignity; and that if beauty be to be determined by suffrages, the elliptical arch will have little to boast, since the only bridge of that kind has now stood *two hundred years without imitation*.

If in opposition to these arguments, and in defiance at once of right reason and general authority, the elliptical arch should at last be chosen, what will the world believe, than that some other motive than reason influenced the determination? And some

degree of partiality cannot but be suspected by him, who has been told that one of the judges appointed to decide this question, is Mr. M—ll—r, who having by ignorance, or thoughtlessness, already preferred the elliptical arch, will probably think himself obliged to maintain his own judgment, though his opinion will avail but little with the publick, when it is known that Mr. S—ps—n declares it to be false.

He that in the list of the committee chosen for the superintendency of the bridge, reads many of the most illustrious names of this great city, will hope that the greater number will have more reverence for the opinion of posterity, than to disgrace themselves, and the metropolis of the kingdom, in compliance with any man, who, instead of voting, aspires to dictate, perhaps without any claim to such superiority, either by greatness of birth, dignity of employment, extent of knowledge, or largeness of fortune.

LETTER II.

SIR, Dec. 8, 1759.

In questions of general concern, there is no law of government, or rule of decency, that forbids open examination and publick discussion. I shall therefore not betray, by a mean apology, that right which no man has power, and, I suppose, no wise man has desire to refuse me; but shall consider the Letter published by you last Friday, in defence of Mr. M—'s * design for a new bridge.

Mr. M—— proposes elliptical arches. It has been objected that elliptical arches are weak: and

* Mr. Mylne.

therefore improper for a bridge of commerce, in a country where greater weights are ordinarily carried by land than perhaps in any other part of the world. That there is an elliptical bridge at Florence is allowed, but the objectors maintain, that its stability is so much doubted, *that carts* are not permitted to pass over it.

To this no answer is made, but that it was built for coaches; and if it had been built for carts, it would have been made stronger: thus all the controvertists agree, that the bridge is too weak for carts; and it is of little importance, whether carts are prohibited because the bridge is weak or whether the architect, knowing that carts were prohibited, voluntarily constructed a weak bridge. The instability of the elliptical arch has been sufficiently proved by argument, and Ammanuti's attempt has proved it by example.

The iron rail, whether gilt or varnished, appears to me unworthy of debate. I suppose every judicious eye will discern it to be minute and trifling, equally unfit to make a part of a great design, whatever be its colour. I shall only observe how little the writer understands his own positions, when he recommends it to be cast in whole pieces from pier to pier. That iron forged is stronger than iron cast, every smith can inform him; and if it be cast in large pieces, the fracture of a single bar must be repaired by a new piece.

The abrupt rise, which is feared from firm circular arches, may be easily prevented, by a little extension of the abutment at each end, which will take away the objection, and add almost nothing to the expence

The whole of the argument in favour of Mr. M——, is only that there is an elliptical bridge at Florence, and an iron balustrade at Rome; the bridge is owned to be weak, and the iron balustrade we consider as mean; and are loth that our own country should unite two follies in a publick work.

The architrave of Perault, which has been pompously produced, bears nothing but its entablature; and is so far from owing its support to the artful section of the stone, that it is held together by cramps of iron; to which I am afraid Mr. M—— must have recourse, if he persists in his ellipsis, or, to use the words of his vindicator, forms his arch of four segments of circles drawn from four different centres.

That Mr. M—— obtained the prize of the architecture at Rome, a few months ago, is willingly confessed; nor do his opponents doubt that he obtained it by deserving it. May he continue to obtain whatever he deserves; but let it not be presumed that a prize granted at Rome, implies an irresistible degree of skill. The competition is only between boys, and the prize given to excite laudable industry, not to reward consummate excellence. Nor will the suffrage of the Romans much advance any name among those who know, what no man of science will deny, that architecture has for some time degenerated at Rome to the lowest state, and that the Pantheon is now deformed by petty decorations.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER III.

SIR, Dec. 15, 1759.

IT is the common fate of erroneous positions, that they are betrayed by defence, and obscured by explanation; that their authors deviate from the main question into incidental disquisitions, and raise a mist where they should let in light.

Of all these concomitants of errours, the Letter of Dec. 10, in favour of elliptical arches, has afforded examples. A great part of it is spent upon digressions. The writer allows, that *the first excellence of a bridge is undoubtedly strength:* but this concession affords him an opportunity of telling us, that strength, or provision against decay, has its limits; and of mentioning the Monument and Cupola, without any advance towards evidence or argument.

The *first excellence of a bridge* is now allowed to be *strength;* and it has been asserted, that a semi-ellipsis has less strength than a semicircle. To this he first answers, that *granting* this position *for a moment,* the semi-ellipsis may yet have strength sufficient for the purposes of commerce. This grant, which was made but for a moment, needed not to have been made at all; for before he concludes his Letter, he undertakes to prove, that the *elliptical arch must in all respects be superiour in strength to the semicircle.* For this daring assertion he made way by the intermediate paragraphs; in which he observes, that *the convexity of a semi-ellipsis may be increased at will to any degree that strength*

may require: which is, that an elliptical arch may be made less elliptical, to be made less weak; or that an arch, which by its elliptical form is superiour in strength to the semicircle, may become almost as strong as a semicircle, by being made almost semicircular.

That the longer diameter of an ellipsis may be shortened, till it shall differ little from a circle, is indisputably true; but why should the writer forget the semicircle differs as little from such an ellipsis? It seems that the difference, whether small or great, is to the advantage of the semicircle; for he does not promise that the elliptical arch, with all the convexity that his imagination can confer, will stand without *cramps of iron*, and *melted lead*, and *large stones*, and *a very thick arch;* assistances which the semicircle does not require, and which can be yet less required by a semi-ellipsis, which is *in all respects superiour in strength.*

Of a man who loves opposition so well, as to be thus at variance with himself, little doubt can be made of his contrariety to others; nor do I think myself entitled to complain of disregard from one, with whom the performances of antiquity have so *little weight:* yet in defiance of all this contemptuous superiority, I must again venture to declare, that *a straight line will bear no weight;* being convinced, that not even the science of Vasari can make that form strong which the laws of nature have condemned to weakness. By the position, that *a straight line will bear nothing*, is meant, that *it receives no strength from straightness;* for that many bodies, laid in straight lines, will support

weight by the cohesion of their parts, every one has found, who has seen dishes on a shelf, or a thief upon the gallows. It is not denied, that stones may be so crushed together by enormous pressure on each side, that a heavy mass may safely be laid upon them; but the strength must be derived merely from the lateral resistance; and the line so loaded will be itself part of the load.

The semi-elliptical arch has one recommendation yet unexamined; we are told that it is difficult of execution. Why difficulty should be chosen for its own sake, I am not able to discover; but it must not be forgotten, that as the convexity is increased, the difficulty is lessened; and I know not well whether this writer, who appears equally ambitious of difficulty and studious of strength, will wish to increase the convexity for the gain of strength, or to lessen it for the love of difficulty.

The friend of Mr. M——, however he may be mistaken in some of his opinions, does not want the appearance of reason, when he prefers facts to theories; and that I may not dismiss the question without some appeal to facts, I will borrow an example, suggested by a great artist, and recommended to those who may still doubt which of the two arches is the stronger, to press an egg first on the ends, and then upon the sides.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

SOME THOUGHTS

ON

AGRICULTURE,

BOTH ANCIENT AND MODERN;

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE HONOUR DUE TO AN ENGLISH FARMER.*

AGRICULTURE, in the primeval ages, was the common parent of traffick: for the opulence of mankind then consisted in cattle, and the product of tillage; which are now very essential for the promotion of trade in general, but more particularly so to such nations as are most abundant in cattle, corn, and fruits. The labour of the Farmer gives employment to the manufacturer, and yields a support for the other parts of the community: it is now the spring which sets the whole grand machine of commerce in motion; and the sail could not be spread without the assistance of the plough. But though the Farmers are of such utility in a state, we find them in general too much disregarded among the politer kind of people

* From the Universal Visitor, for February 1756, p. 59.—Smart, the poet, had a considerable hand in this Miscellany. The very first sentence, however, may convince any reader that Dr. Johnson did not write these "Thoughts;" they are inserted here merely as an introduction to "The Further Thoughts," which follow, and which are undoubtedly his. C.

in the present age; while we cannot help observing the honour that antiquity has always paid to the profession of the husbandman; which naturally leads us into some reflections upon that occasion.

Though mines of gold and silver should be exhausted, and the species made of them lost; though diamonds and pearls should remain concealed in the bowels of the earth, and the womb of the sea; though commerce with strangers be prohibited; though all arts which have no other object than splendour and embellishment, should be abolished; yet the fertility of the earth alone would afford an abundant supply for the occasions of an industrious people, by furnishing subsistence for them, and such armies as should be mustered in their defence. We, therefore, ought not to be surprized, that Agriculture was in so much honour among the ancients: for it ought rather to seem wonderful that it should ever cease to be so, and that the most necessary and most indispensable of all professions should have fallen into any contempt.

Agriculture was in no part of the world in higher consideration than Egypt, where it was the particular object of government and policy: nor was any country ever better peopled, richer, or more powerful. The *Satrapæ*, among the Assyrians and Persians, were rewarded, if the lands in their governments were well cultivated; but were punished if that part of their duty was neglected. Africa abounded in corn; but the most famous countries were Thrace, Sardinia, and Sicily.

Cato, the censor, has justly called Sicily the magazine and nursing mother of the Roman people,

who were supplied from thence with almost all their corn, both for the use of the city, and the subsistence of her armies: though we also find in Livy, that the Romans received no inconsiderable quantities of corn from Sardinia. But, when Rome had made herself mistress of Carthage and Alexandria, Africa and Egypt became her store-houses: for those cities sent such numerous fleets every year, freighted with corn, to Rome, that Alexandria alone annually supplied twenty millions of bushels: and, when the harvest happened to fail in one of these provinces, the other came in to its aid, and supported the metropolis of the world; which, without this supply, would have been in danger of perishing by famine. Rome actually saw herself reduced to this condition under Augustus; for there remained only three days provision of corn in the city: and that prince was so full of tenderness for the people, that he had resolved to poison himself, if the expected fleets did not arrive before the expiration of that time; but they came; and the preservation of the Romans was attributed to the good fortune of their emperor: but wise precautions were taken to avoid the like danger for the future.

When the seat of empire was transplanted to Constantinople, that city was supplied in the same manner: and when the emperor Septimius Severus died, there was corn in the publick magazines for seven years, expending daily 75,000 bushels in bread, for 600,000 men.

The ancients were no less industrious in the cultivation of the vine than in that of corn, though they applied themselves to it later: for Noah planted it by

order, and discovered the use that might be made of the fruit, by pressing out and preserving the juice. The vine was carried by the offspring of Noah into the several countries of the world: but Asia was the first to experience the sweets of this gift; from whence it was imparted to Europe and Africa. Greece and Italy, which were distinguished in so many other respects, were particularly so by the excellency of their wines. Greece was most celebrated for the wines of Cyprus, Lesbos, and Chio; the former of which is in great esteem at present: though the cultivation of the vine has been generally suppressed in the Turkish dominions. As the Romans were indebted to the Grecians for the arts and sciences, so were they likewise for the improvement of their wines; the best of which were produced in the country of Capua, and were called the Massick, Calenian, Formian, Cæcuban, and Falernian, so much celebrated by Horace. Domitian passed an edict for destroying all the vines, and that no more should be planted throughout the greatest part of the west; which continued almost two hundred years afterwards when the emperor Probus employed his soldiers in planting vines in Europe, in the same manner as Hannibal had formerly employed his troops in planting olive-trees in Africa. Some of the ancients have endeavoured to prove, that the cultivation of vines is more beneficial than any other kind of husbandry: but, if this was thought so in the time of Columella, it is very different at present; nor were all the ancients of his opinion, for several gave the preference to pasture lands.

The breeding of cattle has always been considered

as an important part of Agriculture. The riches of Abraham, Laban, and Job, consisted in their flocks and herds. We also find from Latinus in Virgil, and Ulysses in Homer, that the wealth of those princes consisted in cattle. It was likewise the same among the Romans, till the introduction of money, which put a value upon commodities, and established a new kind of barter. Varro has not disdained to give an extensive account of all the beasts that are of any use to the country, either for tillage, breed, carriage, or other conveniencies of man. And Cato, the censor, was of opinion, that the feeding of cattle was the most certain and speedy method of enriching a country.

Luxury, avarice, injustice, violence, and ambition, take up their ordinary residence in populous cities; while the hard and laborious life of the husbandman will not admit of these vices. The honest Farmer lives in a wise and happy state, which inclines him to justice, temperance, sobriety, sincerity, and every virtue that can dignify human nature. This gave room for the poets to feign, that Astræa, the Goddess of Justice, had her last residence among husbandmen, before she quitted the earth. Hesiod and Virgil have brought the assistance of the Muses in praise of Agriculture. Kings, generals, and philosophers, have not thought it unworthy their birth, rank, and genius, to leave precepts to posterity upon the utility of the husbandman's profession. Hiero, Attalus, and Archelaus, kings of Syracuse, Pergamus, and Cappadocia, have composed books for supporting and augmenting the fertility of their different countries. The Carthaginian general Mago wrote twenty-eight vo-

lumes upon this subject; and Cato, the censor, followed his example. Nor have Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle, omitted this article, which makes an essential part of their politicks. And Cicero, speaking of the writings of Xenophon, says, "How fully and excellently does he, in that book called his 'Oeconomicks,' set out the advantages of husbandry, and a country life!"

When Britain was subject to the Romans, she annually supplied them with great quantities of corn; and the Isle of Anglesea was then looked upon as the granary for the western provinces: but the Britons, both under the Romans and Saxons, were employed like slaves at the plough. On the intermixture of the Danes and Normans, possessions were better regulated, and the state of vassalage gradually declined, till it was entirely wore off under the reigns of Henry VII. and Edward VI. for they hurt the old nobility by favouring the commons, who grew rich by trade, and purchased estates.

The wines of France, Portugal, and Spain, are now the best; while Italy can only boast of the wine made in Tuscany. The breeding of cattle is now chiefly confined to Denmark and Ireland. The corn of Sicily is still in great esteem, as well as what is produced in the northern countries: but England is the happiest spot in the universe for all the principal kinds of Agriculture, and especially its great produce of corn.

The improvement of our landed estates, is the enrichment of the kingdom: for, without this, how could we carry on our manufactures, or prosecute our commerce? We should look upon the English

Farmer as the most useful member of society. His arable grounds not only supply his fellow-subjects with all kinds of the best grain, but his industry enables him to export great quantities to other kingdoms, which might otherwise starve; particularly Spain and Portugal: for, in one year, there have been exported 51,520 quarters of barley, 219,781 of malt, 1,920 of oatmeal, 1,329 of rye, and 153,343 of wheat; the bounty on which amounted to 72,433 pounds. What a fund of treasure arises from his pasture lands, which breed such innumerable flocks of sheep, and afford such fine herds of cattle, to feed Britons, and cloath mankind! He rears flax and hemp for the making of linen; while his plantations of apples and hops supply him with generous kinds of liquors.

The land-tax, when at four shillings in the pound, produces 2,000,000 pounds a year. This arises from the labour of the husbandman: it is a great sum: but how greatly is it increased by the means it furnishes for trade? Without the industry of the Farmer, the manufacturer could have no goods to supply the merchant, nor the merchant find any employment for the mariners: trade would be stagnated; riches would be of no advantage to the great; and labour of no service to the poor.

> The Romans, as historians all allow,
> Sought, in extreme distress, the rural plough;
> *Io triumphe!* for the village swain,
> Retir'd to be a nobleman* again.
>
> * *Cincinnatus.*

FURTHER THOUGHTS

ON

AGRICULTURE.*

At my last *visit*, I took the liberty of mentioning a subject, which, I think, is not considered with attention proportionate to its importance. Nothing can more fully prove the ingratitude of mankind, a crime often charged upon them, and often denied, than the little regard which the disposers of honorary rewards have paid to Agriculture; which is treated as a subject so remote from common life, by all those who do not immediately hold the plough, or give fodder to the ox, that I think there is room to question, whether a great part of mankind has yet been informed that life is sustained by the fruits of the earth. I was once indeed provoked to ask a lady of great eminence for genius, *Whether she knew of what bread is made?*

I have already observed, how differently Agriculture was considered by the heroes and wise men of the Roman commonwealth, and shall now only add, that even after the emperours had made great alter-

* From the Visitor for March 1756, p. 111

ation in the system of life, and taught men to portion out their esteem to other qualities than usefulness, Agriculture still maintained its reputation, and was taught by the polite and elegant Celsus among the other arts.

The usefulness of Agriculture I have already shewn; I shall now, therefore, prove its necessity: and having before declared, that it produces the chief riches of a nation, I shall proceed to shew, that it gives its only riches, the only riches which we can call our own, and of which we need not fear either deprivation or diminution.

Of nations, as of individuals, the first blessing is independence. Neither the man nor the people can be happy to whom any human power can deny the necessaries or conveniencies of life. There is no way of living without the need of foreign assistance, but by the product of our own land, improved by our own labour. Every other source of plenty is perishable or casual.

Trade and manufactures must be confessed often to enrich countries; and we ourselves are indebted to them for those ships by which we now command the sea from the equator to the poles, and for those sums with which we have shewn ourselves able to arm the nations of the north in defence of regions in the western hemisphere. But trade and manufactures, however profitable, must yield to the cultivation of lands in usefulness and dignity.

Commerce, however we may please ourselves with the contrary opinion, is one of the daughters of Fortune, inconstant and deceitful as her mother; she chooses her residence where she is least expected,

and shifts her abode, when her continuance is in appearance most firmly settled. Who can read of the present distresses of the Genoese, whose only choice now remaining is, from what monarch they shall solicit protection? Who can see the Hanseatick towns in ruins, where perhaps the inhabitants do not always equal the number of the houses; but he will say to himself, These are the cities, whose trade enabled them once to give laws to the world, to whose merchants princes sent their jewels in pawn, from whose treasuries armies were paid, and navies supplied! And who can then forbear to consider trade as a weak and uncertain basis of power, and wish to his own country greatness more solid, and felicity more durable?

It is apparent, that every trading nation flourishes, while it can be said to flourish, by the courtesy of others. We cannot compel any people to buy from us, or to sell to us. A thousand accidents may prejudice them in favour of our rivals; the workmen of another nation may labour for less price, or some accidental improvement, or natural advantage, may procure a just preference to their commodities; as experience has shewn, that there is no work of the hands, which, at different times, is not best performed in different places.

Traffick, even while it continues in its state of prosperity, must owe its success to Agriculture; the materials of manufacture are the produce of the earth. The wool which we weave into cloth, the wood which is formed into cabinets, the metals which are forged into weapons, are supplied by nature with the help of art. Manufactures, indeed,

and profitable manufactures, are sometimes raised from imported materials, but then we are subjected a second time to the caprice of our neighbours. The natives of Lombardy might easily resolve to retain their silk at home, and employ workmen of their own to weave it. And this will certainly be done when they grow wise and industrious, when they have sagacity to discern their true interest, and vigour to pursue it.

Mines are generally considered as the great sources of wealth, and superficial observers have thought the possession of great quantities of precious metals the first national happiness. But Europe has long seen, with wonder and contempt, the poverty of Spain, who thought herself exempted from the labour of tilling the ground, by the conquest of Peru, with its veins of silver. Time, however, has taught even this obstinate and haughty nation, that without Agriculture they may indeed be the transmitters of money, but can never be the possessors. They may dig it out of the earth, but must immediately send it away to purchase cloth or bread, and it must at last remain with some people wise enough to sell much, and to buy little; to live upon their own lands, without a wish for those things which nature has denied them.

Mines are themselves of no use, without some kind of Agriculture. We have, in our own country, inexhaustible stores of iron, which lie useless in the ore for want of wood. It was never the design of Providence to feed man without his own concurrence; we have from nature only what we cannot provide for ourselves; she gives us wild fruits,

which art must meliorate, and drossy metals, which labour must refine.

Particular metals are valuable, because they are scarce; and they are scarce, because the mines that yield them are emptied in time. But the surface of the earth is more liberal than its caverns. The field, which is this autumn laid naked by the sickle, will be covered, in the succeeding summer, by a new harvest; the grass, which the cattle are devouring, shoots up again when they have passed over it.

Agriculture, therefore, and Agriculture alone, can support us without the help of others, in certain plenty and genuine dignity. Whatever we buy from without, the sellers may refuse; whatever we sell, manufactured by art, the purchasers may reject; but, while our ground is covered with corn and cattle, we can want nothing; and if imagination should grow sick of native plenty, and call for delicacies or embellishments from other countries, there is nothing which corn and cattle will not purchase.

Our country is, perhaps, beyond all others, productive of things necessary to life. The pine-apple thrives better between the tropicks, and better furs are found in the northern regions. But let us not envy these unnecessary privileges. Mankind cannot subsist upon the indulgences of nature, but must be supported by her more common gifts. They must feed upon bread, and be clothed with wool; and the nation that can furnish these universal commodities, may have her ships welcomed at a thousand ports, or sit at home and receive the tribute of foreign countries, enjoy their arts, or treasure up their gold.

It is well known to those who have examined the

state of other countries, that the vineyards of France are more than equivalent to the mines of America; and that one great use of Indian gold, and Peruvian silver, is to procure the wines of Champaigne and Burgundy. The advantage is indeed always rising on the side of France, who will certainly have wines, when Spain, by a thousand natural or accidental causes, may want silver. But surely the valleys of England have more certain stores of wealth. Wines are chosen by caprice; the products of France have not always been equally esteemed; but there never was any age, or people, that reckoned bread among superfluities, when once it was known. The price of wheat and barley suffers not any variation, but what is caused by the uncertainty of seasons.

I am far from intending to persuade my countrymen to quit all other employments for that of manuring the ground. I mean only to prove, that we have, at home, all that we can want, and that therefore we need feel no great anxiety about the schemes of other nations for improving their arts, or extending their traffick. But there is no necessity to infer, that we should cease from commerce, before the revolution of things shall transfer it to some other regions! Such vicissitudes the world has often seen; and therefore such we have reason to expect. We hear many clamours of declining trade, which are not, in my opinion, always true; and many imputations of that decline to governours and ministers, which may be sometimes just, and sometimes calumnious. But it is foolish to imagine, that any care or policy can keep commerce at a stand; which almost every nation has

enjoyed and lost, and which we must expect to lose as we have long enjoyed it.

There is some danger, lest our neglect of Agriculture should hasten its departure. Our industry has for many ages been employed in destroying the woods which our ancestors have planted. It is well known that commerce is carried on by ships, and that ships are built out of trees; and therefore, when I travel over naked plains, to which tradition has preserved the name of forests, or see hills arising on either hand barren and useless, I cannot forbear to wonder, how that commerce, of which we promise ourselves the perpetuity, shall be continued by our descendants; nor can restrain a sigh, when I think on the time, a time at no great distance, when our neighbours may deprive us of our naval influence, by refusing us their timber.

By Agriculture only can commerce be perpetuated; and by Agriculture alone can we live in plenty without intercourse with other nations. This, therefore, is the great art, which every government ought to protect, every proprietor of lands to practise, and every inquirer into nature to improve.

CONSIDERATIONS

ON

THE CORN LAWS.*

By what causes the necessaries of life have risen to a price at which a great part of the people are unable to procure them, how the present scarcity may be remedied, and calamities of the same kind may for the future be prevented, is an enquiry of the first importance: an enquiry before which all the considerations which commonly busy the legislature vanish from the view.

The interruption of trade, though it may distress part of the community, leaves the rest power to communicate relief: the decay of one manufacture may be compensated by the advancement of another: a

* These "Considerations," for which we are indebted to Mr. Malone, who published them in 1808, or rather to his liberal publisher, Mr. Payne, were, in the opinion of Mr. Malone, written in November 1766, when the policy of the parliamentary bounty on the exportation of Corn became naturally a subject of discussion. The harvest in that year had been so deficient, and corn had risen to so high a price, that in the months of September and October there had been many insurrections in the midland counties, to which Dr. Johnson alludes; and which were of so alarming a kind, that it was necessary to repress them by military force.

defeat may be repaired by victory: a rupture with one nation may be balanced by an alliance with another. These are partial and slight misfortunes, which leave us still in the possession of our chief comforts. They may lop some of our superfluous pleasures, and repress some of our exorbitant hopes; but we may still retain the essential part of civil and of private happiness,—the security of law, and the tranquillity of content. They are small obstructions of the stream, which raise a foam and noise where they happen to be found, but at a little distance are neither seen nor felt, and suffer the main current to pass forward in its natural course.

But SCARCITY is an evil that extends at once to the whole community: that neither leaves quiet to the poor, nor safety to the rich: that in its approaches distresses all the subordinate ranks of mankind, and in its extremity must subvert government, drive the populace upon their rulers, and end in bloodshed and massacre. Those who want the supports of life will seize them wherever they can be found. If in any place there are more than can be fed, some must be expelled, or some must be destroyed.

Of this dreadful scene there is no immediate danger; but there is already evil sufficient to deserve and require all our diligence and all our wisdom. The miseries of the poor are such as cannot easily be borne: such as have already incited them in many parts of the kingdom to an open defiance of government, and produced one of the greatest of political evils—the necessity of ruling by immediate force.

Cæsar declared after the battle of Munda, that he had often fought for victory, but that he had that

day fought for life. We have often deliberated how we should prosper; we are now to enquire how we shall subsist.

The present scarcity is imputed by some to the bounty for exporting corn, which is considered as having a necessary and perpetual tendency to pour the grain of this country into other nations.

This position involves two questions: whether the present scarcity has been caused by the bounty, and whether the bounty is likely to produce scarcity in future times.

It is an uncontroverted principle, that *sublatâ causâ tollitur effectus:* if therefore the effect continues when the supposed cause has ceased, that effect must be imputed to some other agency.

The bounty has ceased, and the exportation would still continue, if exportation were permitted. The true reason of the scarcity is the failure of the harvest; and the cause of exportation is the like failure in other countries, where they grow less, and where they are therefore always nearer to the danger of want.

This want is such, that in countries where money is at a much higher value than with us, the inhabitants are yet desirous to buy our corn at a price to which our own markets have not risen.

If we consider the state of those countries, which being accustomed to buy our corn cheaper than ourselves when it was cheap, are now reduced to the necessity of buying it dearer than ourselves when it is dear, we shall yet have reason to rejoice in our own exemption from the extremity of this wide-extended calamity; and if it be necessary to enquire why we

suffer scarcity, it may be fit to consider likewise, why we suffer yet less scarcity than our neighbours.

That the bounty upon corn has produced plenty, is apparent,

Because ever since the grant of the bounty, agriculture has encreased: scarce a sessions has passed without a law for enclosing commons and waste grounds:

Much land has been subjected to tillage, which lay uncultivated with little profit:

Yet, though the quantity of land has been thus encreased, the rent, which is the price of land, has generally encreased at the same time.

That more land is appropriated to tillage, is a proof that more corn is raised; and that the rents have not fallen, proves that no more is raised than can readily be sold.

But it is urged, that exportation, though it encreases our produce, diminishes our plenty: that the merchant has more encouragement for exportation than the farmer for agriculture.

This is a paradox which all the principles of commerce and all the experience of policy concur to confute. Whatever is done for gain, will be done more, as more gain is to be obtained.

Let the effects of the bounty be minutely considered.

The state of every country with respect to corn is varied by the chances of the year.

Those to whom we sell our corn, must have every year either more corn than they want, or less than they [illegible] likewise are naturally subject to the

When they have corn equal to their wants, or more, the bounty has no effect: for they will not buy what they do not want, unless our exuberance be such as tempts them to store it for another year. This case must suppose that our produce is redundant and useless to ourselves; and therefore the profit of exportation produces no inconvenience.

When they want corn, they must buy of us, and buy at a higher price: in this case, if we have corn more than enough for ourselves, we are again benefited by supplying them.

But they may want when we have no superfluity. When our markets rise, the bounty ceases; and therefore produces no evil. They cannot buy our corn but at an higher rate than it is sold at home. If their necessities, as now has happened, force them to give an higher price, that event is no longer to be charged upon the bounty. We may then stop our corn in our ports, and pour it back upon our own markets.

It is in all cases to be considered, what events are physical and certain, and what are political and arbitrary.

The first effect of the bounty is the encrease of agriculture, and by consequence the promotion of plenty. This is an effect physically good, and morally certain. While men are desirous to be rich, where there is profit there will be diligence. If much corn can be sold, much will be raised.

The second effect of the bounty is the diminution by exportation of that product which it occasioned. But this effect is political and arbitrary: we have it wholly in our own hands: we can prescribe its limits, and regulate its quantity. Whenever we

feel want, or fear it, we retain our corn, and feed ourselves upon that which was sown and raised to feed other nations.

It is perhaps impossible for human wisdom to go further, than to contrive a law of which the good is certain and uniform, and the evil, though possible in itself, yet always subject to certain and effectual restraints.

This is the true state of the bounty upon corn: it certainly and necessarily encreases our crops, and can never lessen them but by our own permission.

That, notwithstanding the bounty, there have been from time to time years of scarcity, cannot be denied. But who can regulate the seasons? In the dearest years we owe to the bounty that they have not been dearer. We must always suppose part of our ground sown for our own consumption, and part in hope of a foreign sale. The time sometimes comes, when the product of all this land is scarcely sufficient: but if the whole be too little, how great would have been the deficiency, if we had sown only that part which was designed for ourselves.

"But perhaps, if exportation were less encouraged, the superfluous stores of plentiful years might be laid up by the farmer against years of scarcity."

This may be justly answered by affirming, that, if exportation were discouraged, we should have no years of plenty. Cheapness is produced by the possibility of dearness. Our farmers at present plough and sow with the hope that some country will always be in want, and that they shall grow rich by supplying. Indefinite hopes are always carried by the frailty of human nature beyond reason. While therefore exportation is encouraged, as much a

will be raised as the farmer can hope to sell, and therefore generally more than can be sold at the price of which he dreamed, when he ploughed and sowed.

The greatest part of our corn is well known to be raised by those who pay rent for the ground which they employ, and of whom few can bear to delay the sale of one year's produce to another.

It is therefore vain to hope that large stocks of grain will ever remain in private hands: he that has not sold the corn of last year will with diffidence and reluctance till his field again: the accumulation of a few years would end in a vacation of agriculture, and the husbandman would apply himself to some more profitable calling.

If the exportation of corn were totally prohibited, the quantity possible to be consumed among us would be quickly known, and being known, would rarely be exceeded: for why should corn be gathered which cannot be sold? We should therefore have little superfluity in the most favourable seasons; for the farmer, like the rest of mankind, acts in hope of success, and the harvest seldom outgoes the expectation of the spring. But for droughts or blights, we should never be provided; any intemperature of seasons would reduce us to distress, which we now only read of in our histories: what is now scarcity, would then be famine.

What would be caused by prohibiting exportation, will be caused in a less degree by obstructing it, and in some degree by every deduction of encouragement: as we lessen hope, we shall lessen labour; as we lessen labour, we shall lessen plenty.

It must always be steadily remembered, that the

good of the bounty is certain, and evil avoidable: that by the hope of exportation corn will be encreased, and that this encrease may be kept at home.

Plenty can only be produced by encouraging agriculture; and agriculture can be encouraged only by making it gainful. No influence can dispose the farmer to sow what he cannot sell; and if he is not to have the chance of scarcity in his favour, he will take care that there never shall be plenty.

The truth of these principles our ancestors discovered by reason, and the French have now found it by experience. In this regulation we have the honour of being masters to those, who, in commercial policy, have been long accounted the masters of the world. Their prejudices, their emulation, and their vanity, have at last submitted to learn of us how to ensure the bounties of nature; and it forms a strange vicissitude of opinions, that should incline us to repeal the law which our rivals are adopting.

It may be speciously enough proposed, that the bounty should be discontinued sooner. Of this every man will have his own opinion; which, as no general principles can reach it, will always seem to him more reasonable than that of another. This is a question of which the state is always changing with time and place, and which it is therefore very difficult to state or to discuss.

It may however be considered, that the change of old establishments is always an evil; and that therefore, where the good of the change is not certain and constant, it is better to preserve that reverence and that confidence which is produced by consistency of conduct and permanency of laws.

That, since the bounty was so fixed, the price of

money has been much diminished: so that the bounty does not operate so far as when it was first fixed, but the price at which it ceases, though nominally the same, has, in effect and in reality, gradually diminished.

It is difficult to discover any reason why that bounty, which has produced so much good, and has hitherto produced no harm, should be withdrawn or abated. It is possible, that if it were reduced lower, it would still be the motive of agriculture, and the cause of plenty; but why we should desert experience for conjecture, and exchange a known for a possible good, will not easily be discovered. If by a balance of probabilities, in which a grain of dust may turn the scale—or by a curious scheme of calculation, in which, if one postulate in a thousand be erroneous, the deduction which promises plenty may end in famine;—if, by a specious mode of uncertain ratiocination, the critical point at which the bounty should stop, might seem to be discovered: I shall still continue to believe that it is more safe to trust what we have already tried; and cannot but think bread a product of too much importance to be made the sport of subtilty, and the topick of hypothetical disputation.

The advantage of the bounty is evident and irrefragable. Since the bounty was given, multitudes eat wheat who did not eat it before, and yet the price of wheat has abated. What more is to be hoped from any change of practice? An alteration cannot make our condition better, and is therefore very likely to make it worse.

APPENDIX,

Vol. X. p. 237.

PREFACE

TO THE

CATALOGUE OF THE HARLEIAN LIBRARY,

VOL. III.*

HAVING prefixed to the former volumes of my Catalogue an account of the prodigious collection accumulated in the Harleian Library, there would have been no necessity of any introduction to the subsequent volumes, had not some censures which this great undertaking has drawn upon me, made it proper to offer to the publick an apology for my conduct.

The price, which I have set upon my Catalogue, has been represented by the booksellers as an avaricious innovation; and, in a paper published in the CHAMPION, they, or their mercenary, have reasoned so justly, as to allege, that, if I could afford a very large price for the library, I might therefore afford to give away the Catalogue.

* This curious Preface, in which Dr. Johnson assumes the character of Thos. Osborne, the bookseller, escaped the Editor's notice while preparing the contents of this volume; nor indeed, has it hitherto appeared in any edition of our author's works. But it is surely worth reprinting as a proof that Johnson, at all times, had the "pen of a ready writer." C.

I should have imagined that accusations, concerted by such heads as these, would have vanished of themselves, without any answer; but, since I have the mortification to find that they have been in some degree regarded by men of more knowledge than themselves, I shall explain the motives of my procedure.

My original design was, as I have already explained, to publish a methodical and exact Catalogue of this library, upon the plan which has been laid down, as I am informed, by several men of the first rank among the learned. It was intended by those who undertook the work, to make a very exact disposition of all the subjects, and to give an account of the remarkable differences of the editions, and other peculiarities, which make any book eminently valuable: and it was imagined, that some improvements might, by pursuing this scheme, be made in literary history.

With this view was the Catalogue begun, when the price was fixed upon it in public advertisements; and it cannot be denied, that such a catalogue would have been willingly purchased by those who understood its use. But, when a few sheets had been printed, it was discovered, that the scheme was impracticable, without more hands than could be procured, or more time than the necessity of a speedy sale would allow: the Catalogue was therefore continued without notes, at least in the greatest part; and, though it was still performed better than those which are daily offered to the public, fell much below the original design.

It was then no longer proper to insist upon a price;

and therefore, though money was demanded upon delivery of the Catalogue, it was only taken as a pledge that the Catalogue was not, as is very frequent, wantonly called for, by those who never intended to peruse it, and I therefore promised that it should be taken again in exchange for any book rated at the same value.

It may be still said, that other booksellers give away their catalogues without any such precaution, and that I ought not to make any new or extraordinary demands. But, I hope, it will be considered, at how much greater expence my Catalogue was drawn up: and be remembered, that when other booksellers give their catalogues, they give only what will be of no use when their books are sold, and what, if it remained in their hands, they must throw away: whereas I hope that this Catalogue will retain its use, and, consequently, its value, and be sold with the catalogues of the Barberinian and Marckian libraries.

However, to comply with the utmost expectations of the world, I have now published the second part of my Catalogue, upon conditions still more commodious for the purchaser, as I intend, that all those who are pleased to receive them at the same price of five shillings a volume, shall be allowed at any time, within three months after the day of sale, either to return them in exchange for books, or to send them back, and receive their money.

Since, therefore, I have absolutely debarred myself from receiving any advantage from the sale of the Catalogue, it will be reasonable to impute it rather to necessity than choice, that I shall continue it to two

volumes more, which the number of the single tracts which have been discovered, make indispensably requisite. I need not tell those who are acquainted with affairs of this kind, how much pamphlets swell a catalogue, since the title of the least book may be as long as that of the greatest.

Pamphlets have been for many years, in this nation, the canals of controversy, politics, and sacred history, and therefore will, doubtless, furnish occasion to a very great number of curious remarks. And I take this opportunity of proposing to those who are delighted with this kind of study, that, if they will encourage me, by a reasonable subscription, to employ men qualified to make the observations, for which this part of the catalogue will furnish occasion, I will procure the whole fifth and sixth volumes* to be executed in the same manner with the most laboured part of this, and interspersed with notes of the same kind.

If any excuse were necessary for the addition of these volumes, I have already urged in my defence the strongest plea, no less than absolute necessity, it being impossible to comprise in four volumes, however large, or however closely printed, the titles which yet remain to be mentioned.

But, I suppose, none will blame the multiplication of volumes, to whatever number they may be continued, which every one may use without buying them, and which are therefore published at no expence but my own.

* This scheme was never executed; the fifth volume, the only one subsequently published, was a mere shop catalogue. C.

There is one accusation still remaining, by which I am more sensibly affected, and which I am therefore desirous to obviate, before it has too long prevailed. I hear that I am accused of rating my books at too high a price, at a price which no other person would demand. To answer this accusation, it is necessary to enquire what those who urge it, mean by a high price. The price of things valuable for their rarity is entirely arbitrary, and depends upon the variable taste of mankind, and the casual fluctuation of the fashion, and can never be ascertained like that of things only estimable according to their use.

If, therefore, I have set a high value upon books: if I have vainly imagined literature to be more fashionable than it really is, or idly hoped to revive a taste well nigh extinguished, I know not why I should be persecuted with clamour and invective, since I only shall suffer by my mistake, and be obliged to keep those books, which I was in hopes of selling.

If those who charge me with asking an *high price*, will explain their meaning, it may be possible to give them an answer less general. If they measure the price at which the books are now offered, by that at which they were bought by the late possessor, they will find it diminished at least three parts in four: If they would compare it with the demands of other booksellers, they must find the same books in their hands, and they will be, perhaps, at last reduced to confess, that they mean, by a high price, only a price higher than they are inclined to give.

I have, at least, a right to hope, that no gentle-

man will receive an account of the price from the booksellers, of whom it may easily be imagined that they will be willing, since they cannot depreciate the books, to exaggerate the price: and I will boldly promise those who have been influenced by malevolent reports, that, if they will be pleased, at the day of sale, to examine the prices with their own eyes, they will find them lower than they have been represented.

END OF THE TENTH VOLUME.

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